



**BRITISH-IRISH PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
TIONÓL PARLAIMINTEACH NA BREATAINE AGUS
NA HÉIREANN**

**RULES FOR THE
CONDUCT OF BUSINESS**

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MEMBERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

1. Membership

- (a) The British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly is composed of representatives of the participating institutions as follows:
- (i) twenty-five Members of the *Oireachtas*;
 - (ii) twenty-five Members of Parliament, including Peers;
 - (iii) five Members of the National Assembly for Wales;
 - (iv) five Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly;
 - (v) five Members of the Scottish Parliament;
 - (vi) one Member of the High Court of Tynwald;
 - (vii) one Member of the States of Jersey; and
 - (viii) one Member of the States of Guernsey.

- (b) Up to twenty Associate Members may be nominated from the *Oireachtas* and from Parliament, four Associate Members may be nominated from the National Assembly for Wales, from the Northern Ireland Assembly and from the Scottish Parliament, and one Associate Member from the High Court of Tynwald, from the States of Jersey and from the States of Guernsey; and the Steering Committee may, at the request or on behalf of a Member to fill a vacant place, invite an Associate Member to assume the powers and responsibilities of a Member of the same institution for the whole or part of the Session:

Except that the Associate Members from the High Court of Tynwald, the States of Jersey and the States of Guernsey shall be entitled to attend any Session in addition to the Members for those institutions; but unless replacing a Member at the request of the Steering Committee they shall not vote nor be counted in the quorum.

- (c) Members of the participating institutions shall be nominated to the Assembly in accordance with procedures to be determined by those institutions themselves and should as far as possible be representative of the political groupings represented in those institutions.

- (d) The term of office of a member or of an Associate Member shall commence when his or her nomination has been certified to the Clerks, and shall expire on the certification of his or her discharge by the nominating institution or following a determination made in accordance with Rule 2(d) or when he or she ceases to be a Member of that institution, whether by dissolution or for any other reason:

Except that Members and Associates nominated to the Assembly shall, notwithstanding any dissolution of the nominating institution, remain Members and Associates of the Assembly until the end of the next Session or until new nominations have been made, whichever is the earlier.

- (e) Unless otherwise provided, references in the Rules to Members include Associate Members who have assumed the powers and responsibilities of Members.

2. Participation in proceedings

- (a) At the commencement of any Session, the Chair shall inform the Assembly of any Associate Member who has accepted the invitation of the Steering Committee to assume the powers and responsibilities of a Member for the whole of the Session.

- (b) At any time during the Session, a Member may seek the authority of the Steering Committee

to be replaced by an Associate Member for part of the Session; and at the discretion of the Committee, the Associate Member may assume the powers and responsibilities of a Member for the part of the session so specified and the Chair shall inform the Assembly accordingly.

- (c) Members of the participating institutions not nominated Members of the Assembly and others may be invited by the Steering Committee in writing to address the Assembly; invited Members of the participating institutions may also take part in debates; and details of these invitations shall be included in the proposed programme of business prepared by the Steering Committee under Rule 10.
- (d) Any Member who fails to attend three consecutive Sessions may be deemed by the Steering Committee to have vacated their membership. If the Steering Committee makes such a determination, in accordance with Rule 1(b), it may invite an Associate Member from that institution to fill the vacancy created. No such determination shall be made by the Steering Committee unless a representative from the institution in question shall be present at the meeting of the Committee.

CO-CHAIRS

3. Election of Co-Chairs

- (a) At the election of Co-Chairs, the Chair shall be taken by that elected Member present who has served for the longest continuous period as a Member of Parliament or of the *Oireachtas*.
- (b) A Member taking the Chair under paragraph (a) shall enjoy all the powers of the Chair:

Provided that while he or she is in the Chair, no business other than the election of Co-Chairs may be proceeded with.

4. Co-Chairs

- (a) Two Co-Chairs shall be elected of whom one shall be a Member of Parliament and one of the *Oireachtas*.
- (b) An Associate Member may not be elected Co-Chair.
- (c) The Co-Chairs shall not normally participate in debate; and neither shall vote.
- (d) Five Members shall be elected as Vice-Chairs of the Assembly, of whom at least one shall be a Member of Parliament, one of the *Oireachtas* and one from one of the other participating institutions.

5. Powers of Chair

- (a) All powers conferred upon the Chairs by these Rules are enjoyed by both Co-Chairs equally.
- (b) A Vice-Chair (and, in exceptional circumstances, another member of the Assembly) may take the Chair in the absence of both Co-Chairs, when both Co-Chairs are unable to preside, or by invitation, and while in the Chair a Vice-Chair or other member presiding shall enjoy all the powers and perform all the duties of the Chair.
- (c) A Member presiding by virtue of paragraph (b) of this Rule may not take the Chair during a debate in which he or she has participated, nor may he or she speak in a debate which or she has previously chaired.

6. Disciplinary powers of the Chair

- (a) The Chair shall call to order any Member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition or uses disorderly expressions in debate, and may in serious cases direct them to discontinue their speech.
- (b) In the case of grossly disorderly conduct or disregard of the authority of the Chair, or of persistent and willful obstruction by abuse of the rules or otherwise, the Chair shall take such action (including the exclusion of the offending Member or Members from the Chamber for the remainder of the daily sitting or the proposal of a Question involving disciplinary sanctions against the offending Member) as he or she sees fit.

7. Power to enforce time-limits on speeches

If the proposal of the Chair regarding a time-limit on speeches under Rule 27 has been agreed to, he or she may accordingly direct any Member whose speech exceeds the prescribed time-limit to resume his or her seat forthwith.

STEERING COMMITTEE

8. Steering Committee: constitution, quorum and duties

- (a) There shall be a Steering Committee consisting of the Co-Chairs, together with the five Vice-Chairs, one representative each of the National Assembly for Wales, the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Scottish Parliament, one representative from the High Court of Tynwald, the States of Jersey and the States of Guernsey collectively, elected from their number by the Members representing those institutions, and any Committee Chair who is not already a member of the Steering Committee in another capacity. A Vice-Chair elected from amongst the membership of the National Assembly for Wales, the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Scottish Parliament and the Crown Dependencies, in accordance with Rule 4 (d) shall be deemed to be the representative of that institution on the committee.
- (b) The Co-Chairs shall be *ex officio* Co-Chairs of the Committee:

Provided that in the absence of both Co-Chairs the committee may choose a Vice-Chair to preside for that meeting.
- (c) The quorum of the committee shall be five including the Member in the Chair, comprising at least two Members of Parliament and two Members of the *Oireachtas* and one Member from the other participating institutions.
- (d) A Member of the committee may nominate another Member of the Assembly or an associate Member to replace him for the duration of any meeting of the committee.
- (e) In addition to the duties placed upon it by the Rules, the committee shall act as appropriate to the best interests of the Assembly.

SESSIONS AND DAILY SITTINGS

9. Sessions

- (a) Unless otherwise determined by the Steering Committee, there shall be two Sessions in a calendar year.
- (b) Sessions shall normally be held alternately in the United Kingdom and Crown Dependencies and in Ireland.

- (c) The Assembly shall normally meet in public; but the Steering Committee may direct that an item of business shall be debated in private.

10. Notice of Sessions and proposed programme of business

The Steering Committee shall, not later than six weeks before the proposed date of the first daily sitting of any Session, communicate to all Members and Associate Members the dates and place of the next Session, and shall not later than one week before the first daily sitting similarly communicate its proposals regarding the programme of business for the Session, indicating any debate which it proposes should be in private.

11. Adoption of programme of business

- (a) Subject only to the election of Co-Chairs and of Vice Chairs, the first daily sitting of any Session shall commence with consideration of the Steering Committee's proposed programme of business.

- (b) In the consideration of the proposed programme of business, the Chair shall—

- (i) call on a Member of the Steering Committee to move its adoption in a brief initial statement;

- (ii) propose the Question on any proposal to amend the proposed programme following a brief explanatory statement from a Member who moves such amendment and from a member of the Steering Committee; and shall, not later than half an hour after the commencement of proceedings thereon, put the Question for the adoption of the proposed programme of business (or its adoption so far as amended, as the case may be).

- (c) If the proposed programme of business is not adopted, the Steering Committee may make fresh proposals.

12. Proposals to amend programme of business

At any time in the course of a Session, the Steering Committee may make proposals to alter or supplement the programme of business; and such proposals—

- (a) shall be circulated in writing as soon as possible;

- (b) shall at the daily sitting on which they are to be considered have precedence over all other business; and

- (c) shall, unless the proposal is made under the provisions of Rule 13, be considered in accordance with Rule 11(b).

13. Specific and important matters which should have urgent consideration

- (a) A Motion tabled by a Member which concerns a specific and important matter which in the opinion of the Member should have urgent consideration but which is not included in the programme of business adopted for any Session shall be proceeded with as provided in paragraph (b) below, provided that the Motion has been signed by at least eighteen Members, of whom eight are Members of Parliament, eight Members of the *Oireachtas*.

- (b) When a motion has been received under paragraph (a) above, the Chair shall, as soon as may be thereafter, permit a brief explanation to be made by a Member who has signed the Motion and by a Member who opposes it; and the Motion shall then stand referred to the Steering Committee, which shall consider the matter and its urgency and shall report on

whether or not they propose to alter or supplement the programme of business in order to permit the Motion to be considered.

- (c) The provisions of Rule 12(a) and (b) shall apply to proposals which involve alteration to or supplementing of the programme of business arising from reports made under this Rule, and the Question on the amendment of the programme shall be put forthwith.
- (d) A decision by the Steering Committee that the programme of business should not be altered to permit the Motion to be considered shall be final; and another request for a debate on the same matter may not be made in that Session.

14. Daily Sittings

- (a) Daily sittings commence at the hour laid down in the programme of business; and unless in the opinion of the Chair proceedings could be brought to a conclusion by a short extension of the sitting, the Chair shall, at the time specified in the programme of business for the ending of the sitting, interrupt any debate then proceeding, and the sitting shall stand adjourned till the next daily sitting prescribed in the programme of business.
- (b) The resumption of any debate on which a Question has been proposed but has not been disposed of when business is interrupted shall (unless otherwise provided for in the agreed programme of business) stand referred to the Steering Committee:

Provided that Motions under Rule 26 not disposed of when business is interrupted shall lapse.

- (c) The Chair shall have power at his or her discretion—
 - (i) to suspend proceedings until an hour to be named by him or her before the hour prescribed for the interruption of business (by this Rule or otherwise), or
 - (ii) to declare that the sitting stands adjourned until the next daily sitting provided for in the programme of business. Provided that if the sitting is declared adjourned under this paragraph, paragraph (b) shall apply to the business then under consideration.

MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

15. Motions

- (a) Motions may be tabled by Members or in the name of the Steering Committee.
- (b) With the exception of Motions to elect the Chairs or Vice-Chairs, Motions under Rule 26, and Motions under Rule 13, Motions tabled by Members must be signed by five Members from at least three of the institutions represented in the Assembly.
- (c) Motions may be tabled in the name and with the agreement of the Steering Committee by any of its members.

16. Inclusion of Motions in programme of business

- (a) Subject to paragraphs (b) and (c) of this Rule, Motions tabled by Members under Rule 15 shall stand referred to the Steering Committee for inclusion, at the discretion of the Committee, together with Motions tabled in the name of the Steering Committee, in the proposed programme of business for a Session prepared in pursuance of Rule 10. Motions

not included in the proposed programme may be published separately under the authority of the Committee at the beginning of a Session and subsequently.

- (b) Motions tabled by Members which have the support of at least fifteen Members from at least three participating institutions shall be included by the Steering Committee in the proposed programme of business.
- (c) Motions to which this Rule refers must reach the Clerks not later than two weeks before the opening of a Session.

17. Amendments

- (a) Amendments to Motions may be tabled by any Member. A Member may move an amendment even if he has not signed it.
- (b) With the exception of amendments to the proposed programme of business under Rule 11, amendments must normally be tabled at the latest before the end of the daily sitting preceding that at which they are proposed to be considered. In the case of the first daily sitting of a Session, amendments must normally be tabled before the opening of the sitting.
- (c) The Chair has power to select for debate the amendments to be moved to any Motion.

18. Withdrawal of Motions and amendments

A Motion or an amendment may be withdrawn at any time;

- (i) at the discretion of the Member who moved it, or
- (ii) by the Co-Chair who is presiding, with the concurrence of the other Co-Chair.

QUESTIONS

19. Questions

- (a) When a Minister who has been invited to address the Assembly has indicated that he or she is prepared in public to answer oral Questions, the proposed programme of business under Rule 10 may make provision therefore, provided that the address and the answers to Questions shall not continue for longer than one and a half hours in aggregate.
- (b) Questions must—
 - (i) seek information or elucidation relative to public affairs for which the Minister is officially responsible; and
 - (ii) be expressed as succinctly as possible, and contain no argument or intemperate or offensive expressions, and the Steering Committee may, after such consultation with the Member submitting the Question as may be practicable, direct that any irregular Question be not received or be amended so as to bring into conformity with this Rule.
- (c) Notices of Questions must reach the Clerks in writing not later than 6.00 pm on the tenth working day preceding that on which they are to be asked; and a list of questions shall be circulated as soon as possible thereafter to all Members and to the Minister concerned, so arranged that—
 - (i) Questions shall alternate between those submitted by

Members of the *Oireachtas*, by Members of Parliament, by Members of the Scottish Parliament, by Members of the National Assembly for Wales, by Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly and, collectively, by Members of the High Court of Tynwald, the States of Guernsey and the States of Jersey, and subject to that,

(ii) the order of Questions has been established by random means:

Provided that priority may be given under sub-paragraph (ii) to a Question tabled on behalf of the Committee by the chair of the Committee most relevant to the Minister's responsibilities.

- (d) No Member shall give notice of more than one Question to a Minister; and any Questions not reached shall lapse.
- (e) A Question shall be put by a Member rising in his or her place and indicating the number of the Question on the list of questions; and supplementary Questions may be put only for the further elucidation of the answer given, and shall be subject to the ruling of the Chair, both as to relevance and as to number.

RULES OF DEBATE

20. Members to address Chair

Members participating in debate shall address the Chair.

21. No seconders required

No Motion or amendment shall require to be seconded after being moved.

22. Proposal of question

When a Motion or amendment has been moved, the Chair shall propose the Question thereon in the terms of the Motion or in the form, That the amendment be made.

23. Members speaking in debate

(a) Members may speak in debate only when called upon to do so by the Chair.

(b) No Member may speak more than once to the same Question:

Provided that:

- (i) the Member who moved a substantive Motion shall have a right of reply; and
- (ii) except as provided in Rule 11 and 13, a Member may speak twice to the same Question having obtained the leave of all Members present.

24. Order in debate

(a) A Member must confine his or her speech to the question under discussion.

(b) Members may not in debate (or in Motions or amendments) use expressions which are intemperate or offensive with respect to the personal character or conduct of another Member or of Members of the participating institutions.

25. Pecuniary interest or benefits

Before participating in debate or asking any Question, Members shall declare any relevant pecuniary interest or benefits which they may, directly or indirectly, have, have had or expect to have.

26. Motions for adjournment of debate or sitting

If a Motion be made for the adjournment of the debate or of the sitting, in order to supersede the Motion then before the Assembly, the Chair may:

- (i) propose the question thereon for debate;
- (ii) decline to propose the Question thereon; or
- (iii) put the Question forthwith;

and business set down for a daily sitting and not disposed of following agreement to a Motion for the adjournment of the debate or of the sitting under this Rule shall stand referred to the Steering Committee, which may under Rule 12 propose to place such business on the Order of Business of a subsequent daily sitting.

Provided that:

- (i) subject to the provisions of Rule 14, the Chair shall put the Question necessary to dispose of Motions under this Rule not later than one hour after their commencements, and
- (ii) no Member shall make a Motion under this Rule more than once in the course of a debate on any question.

TIME-LIMITS

27. Time-limits on speeches

- (a) The Chair may, at discretion, propose at the opening of or during any debate that a time-limit should apply to speeches made in the debate.
- (b) Such a rule may include a limit for opening and closing speeches and for the speeches of those invited to participate in debate under Rule 2 different from that to be applied to other speeches.
- (c) The Question for the adoption of the Chair's proposal regarding time-limits shall be put forthwith without amendment or debate.

QUORUM

28. Quorum

- (a) If in the course of debate notice is taken that a quorum is not present, and a count reveals the absence of a quorum, the business under discussion shall thereupon stand adjourned, and the next business (if any) shall be proceeded with:

Provided that the resumption of the debate may be proposed to be placed on the Order of Business of a subsequent daily sitting by the Steering Committee under Rule 12.

- (b) A quorum is twenty-six Members (excluding the Chairman in the Chair):

Provided that there shall be included in the quorum eight Members of Parliament, eight Members of the *Oireachtas* and five members from at least two of the other participating institutions.

VOTING

29. Voting

- (a) It is the practice of the Assembly to proceed by consensus so far as possible; however, if on any Question being put the Chair's declaration of the outcome of a vote by voices is challenged, the Assembly will proceed to a division by roll-call.
- (b) Having proceeded to a division by roll-call, the Question shall be decided by a simple majority, save that if it should appear on a division that fewer than a quorum have voted

- (i) the Chair shall announce that the Question (including the substantive Question if the division takes place on a Motion under Rule 26) has not been decided, and is deferred;
- (ii) next business, if any, shall be proceeded with; and
- (iii) the Steering Committee may under Rule 12 propose to place on the Programme of Business of a subsequent daily sitting the putting of the deferred Question.

PRIVATE DEBATES

30. Private debates

- (a) At the beginning of a private debate, the Chair shall order the withdrawal of all persons other than—
 - (i) Members and Associate Members who have assumed the powers and responsibilities of absent Members;
 - (ii) Associate Members attending in a private capacity, without the power to participate in the proceedings of the Body;
 - (iii) the Clerks and officials responsible for servicing the meeting, and advising Members;
 - (iv) government officials concerned with the matters under discussion; and
 - (v) any person attending under the provisions of Rule 2(b) and officials in attendance on such a person.
 - (vi) if the Chair so decides, any person attending under the provisions of Rule 2(c) and officials in attendance on such a person.
- (b) Unless otherwise agreed, the first public statement on the proceedings in private debate shall be made by the Chair.
- (c) No views expressed by any Member in private debate shall be attributed to him in the public statement made by the Chair: and no Member shall make a public statement on proceedings in private debate either before the Chair's statement is made or which attributes to any other Member views expressed by that member.

COMMITTEES

31. Number and Membership of committees

- (a) Up to six standing committees at any one time may be appointed by the Steering Committee, which shall assign to each its order of reference, place of meeting and budgetary limit and shall determine the date by which the committee's report is to be made.
- (b) Up to eighteen Members or Associate Members may be nominated by the Steering Committee to each committee, one-third of whom shall be Members of the *Oireachtas*, one-third Members of Parliament, and one-third Members of the other participating institutions.
- (c) Up to fifteen Members or Associate Members, one-third of whom shall be Members of the *Oireachtas*, one-third Members of Parliament, and one-third Members of the other participating institutions, may be nominated by the Steering Committee to each committee as a panel of Alternates for that committee; and such Members or Associate Members shall receive all papers of the committee to which they are nominated as reserves as if they were full Members of that committee.

- (d) The Chairs of the Assembly shall be members of all committees *ex officii*; but they shall not vote nor be counted in the quorum.
- (e) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs (b) and (c) above—
 - (i) any Committee appointed by the Steering Committee to consider matters exclusively the concern of the two sovereign governments and parliaments shall consist of equal numbers of Members of the *Oireachtas* and Members of Parliament; and
 - (ii) up to ten Members or Associate Members may be nominated to that committee under the provisions of paragraph (c), half of whom shall be Members of the *Oireachtas* and half Members of Parliament.
- (f) The Chair of a committee may at the request of a Member or Associate Member nominated under paragraph (b) or paragraph (e)(i) above who is unable to attend a meeting of the committee nominate an Alternate to replace that Member for the duration of that meeting; and such nominee shall be taken from the panel of Alternates nominated to that committee for that purpose and shall have the right to vote at the meeting for which he or she is nominated and shall be counted in the quorum.

32. **Powers to appoint sub-committees and rapporteurs**

- (a) Without prejudice to the generality of the rules of the Assembly, the Steering Committee may confer on any of the committees the power to appoint sub-committees, and to refer to such sub-committees any matter comprehended by its order of reference and to delegate any of its powers to such sub-committees, provided that, in the case of each committee, only one sub-committee shall be appointed at any time.
- (b) A committee shall assign to a sub-committee its place of meeting and its budgetary limit, and shall determine the date by which the sub-committee's report is to be made.
- (c) Except as provided by (d) below, five Members or Associate Members shall be nominated by a committee to each sub-committee, at least one of whom shall be a Member of the *Oireachtas* and one a Member of Parliament.
- (d) In the case of Committee A four Members or Associate Members may be nominated by the Committee to a sub-committee, at least one of whom shall be a Member of the *Oireachtas* and one a Member of Parliament.
- (e) The Chair and Shadow Chair of the Committee shall be members of each sub-committee *ex officii*.
- (f) The quorum of a sub-committee shall be three, one of whom shall be a Member of the *Oireachtas* one a Member of Parliament and one a member of another participating institution.
- (g) The sub-committees shall report on their deliberations to the Committee.
- (h) On delivery of its report each sub-committee shall be dissolved, unless the Committee otherwise orders.
- (i) A Committee may, subject to the approval of the Steering Committee, appoint rapporteurs in respect of matters to be specified by the Committee.
- (j) In respect of matters specified in paragraph (i) above, rapporteurs shall be nominated by a Committee to undertake an inquiry the Committee shall have regard to the balance of representation of Members from all of the institutions represented on the Committee.
- (k) A committee shall assign to the rapporteurs their place of meeting and budgetary limit, and shall determine the date by which the rapporteurs' report is to be made. In making their

inquiries, rapporteurs should act jointly and shall not be substituted by any other Member of the Committee.

- (l) Rapporteurs shall report the outcome of their inquiries to the committee.
- (m) The appointment of the rapporteurs shall cease on delivery of their report, unless the committee orders otherwise.

33. Chairmanship and Quorum of committees

(a) When nominating Members to each committee, the Steering Committee shall fix the quorum (which shall normally comprise, as far as possible), Members of all the participating institutions and shall appoint the chairman and alternate chairman, however only Members of Parliament and of the *Oireachtas* may act as chair or alternate chair of Committee A

(b) The Steering Committee shall have regard to the balance of representation of Members from all of the institutions represented in the Assembly when appointing the chairmen and alternate chairmen of committees.

34 Meetings of committees in private

The meetings of committees shall be conducted in private, unless a committee otherwise order.

35. *Ad hoc* working groups

The Steering Committee may appoint, as it see fit, working groups *ad hoc* to consider any matter which the Steering Committee deems appropriate; and the Steering Committee shall determine in relation to such groups their order of reference, chairmanship; membership; size; duration; place of meeting, and budgetary limit, and shall determine the timescale by which they shall report back to the Steering Committee.

36. Committee Reports

- (a) Reports agreed by a committee or working group are sent to the Steering Committee which may at its discretion place an appropriate Motion in its name on the proposed programme of business of a Session.
- (b) On receiving a report from a committee or working group the Steering Committee may, at its discretion and at the Committee's request, consent either to—
 - (i) early publication of the report on a date specified by the Steering Committee; or
 - (ii) early limited publication of embargoed copies to those who have come before the committee and to such journalists and others as the committee or working group think fit, on the understanding that no public use is made of the report unless and until its text is fully published.
- (c) Where consent to early publication is withheld, the report may be published only—
 - (i) If the debate is to be held in public; and
 - (ii) at the commencement of the debate on the appropriate Motion.
- (d) No public comment concerning the contents of the report is to be made by any Member in advance of its full publication.

PROCEEDINGS AND PAPERS

37. Proceedings and Reports

- (a) Minutes of Proceedings of each daily sitting shall be prepared by the Clerks for circulation.
- (b) A verbatim or summary Report of Debates shall be compiled and, with the approval of the Chair, a copy of the Report incorporating the debates held in public and those private debates relating to the business of the Assembly shall be communicated to Members and Associate Members as soon as may be after the conclusion of each Session.
- (c) Minutes of Proceedings of any committee or working group shall be prepared by the secretary.

38. Daily Order of Business

The Clerks shall prepare and circulate to Members an Order of Business for each daily sitting, based on the programme of business adopted for the Session and including the Motions, amendments, Questions and other business for consideration at that sitting.

CLERKS

39. Clerks

(a) There shall be two Clerks (one of whom shall be an official of the House of Commons and one of whom shall be an official of the Houses of the *Oireachtas*), who shall be jointly responsible for the exercise of the Clerk's duties, including—

- (i) advice to the Chairmen and Members of the Assembly on its Rules and procedure;
- (ii) reception and circulation of Motions, amendments, Questions and working documents;
and
- (iii) liaison and other continuing aspects of the working of the Assembly between Sessions.

(b) There shall be Assistant Clerks to the Assembly who shall support the Clerks in the discharge of their duties, including acting as Clerk to committees and groups established under Rules 31, 32 and 35.

(c) Assistant Clerks specified in (b) above, shall be officials of the United Kingdom Parliament, the Houses of the *Oireachtas* or the other participating institutions represented in the Assembly.

(d) the Clerks, with the consent of the Steering Group, may make such arrangements as seems appropriate to them for the administrative support of the Assembly.