TITHE AN OIREACHTAIS

AN COMHCHOISTE UM ACHAINÍOCHA ON bPOBAL

TUARASCÁIL BHLIANTÚIL 2017

HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

32JCPP003

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Chairman's Foreword

On behalf of the Joint Committee on Public Petitions, I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Committee which sets out the work undertaken by it during the period January to December 2017.

The main role of the Joint Committee is to consider petitions received from members of the public on matters of general public concern, or interest in relation to their legislative powers, or an issue of public policy. The Committee exists to assist all members of society voice their opinion on any issue of public importance, whether national or regional.

The Joint Committee met 16 times from January 2017 to December 2017. During this time period the Committee received 42 new petitions, of which it carried out consideration of 34 petitions. Of the petitions considered, 25 were closed and two were deemed to be inadmissible as per the Terms of Reference of the Committee. The Committee also considered as a public policy issue the discontinued Mobility Allowance and Motorised Transport Grant Scheme.

The work of the Joint Committee would not be possible without the continued co-operation of a number of key contributors. I would like to acknowledge the essential contribution of Government Departments and Public Bodies, and thank them for their continued assistance. I would also like to thank the petitioners for taking the time to engage with the Committee.

I would like to acknowledge and thank my colleagues on the Joint Committee and the staff of the secretariat for their continuous hard work and dedication in carrying out the important work of the Committee.

_____
Sean Sherlock T.D.
Chairman
7 February, 2018.

1. Content and Format of Report

This report has been prepared pursuant to Standing Order 89 (3), (4), (5) and (6) (Dáil Éireann) and Standing Order 76 (3), (4), (5) and (6) (Seanad Éireann) which provide for the Joint Committee to-

- undertake a review of its procedure and its role generally;
- prepare an annual work programme;
- lay minutes of its proceedings before both Houses;
- make an annual report to both Houses.

At its meeting on the 7 February 2018 the Joint Committee agreed that these items should be included in this report covering the period from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017.

2. Establishment and Functions

2.1 Establishment of the Select Committee

On 12 July, 2016, Members were appointed by Order to serve on the Dáil's Selection Committee on Public Petitions.

2.2 Establishment of the Joint Committee

On 20 July 2016, Members were appointed by Order to serve on the Seanad's Dáil's Selection Committee on Public Petitions, In accordance with Standing Orders, both together form the Joint Committee on Public Petitions.

2.3 Functions of the Joint Committee

The Joint Committee on Public Petitions provides for a process whereby an individual person, a body corporate or an unincorporated association of persons can address a petition to the Houses of the Oireachtas. This is viewed as an important avenue for individuals to participate in the democratic process. The Joint Committee consists of seven members of Dáil Éireann and four members of Seanad Éireann. Members of the public are able to take their policy concerns directly to the heart of Parliament and to seek to influence the parliamentary agenda. Those wishing to submit a petition can do so in writing or online using webpages and forms designed for this specific purpose.

2.4 Powers of the Joint Committee

The passage of resolutions by each House in adopting Standing Orders in relation to a petitions process enabled petitions to be addressed to the Houses of the Oireachtas on matters of general public concern, or interest in relation to their legislative powers or an issue of public policy.

The Joint Committee on Public Petitions is specifically charged with considering-

- petitions received by the Houses of the Oireachtas;
- such other matters as may be referred to the Joint Committee by the Houses of the Oireachtas; and
- any other matters.

The Joint Committee may also engage with the Committee on Petitions of the European Parliament, including in relation to the European Citizens' Initiative.

Petitions received stand referred to the Joint Committee on Public Petitions. In general, a petition must relate to a matter within the competence of the Houses of the Oireachtas and must not offend the usual parliamentary rules and practices (e.g. relates to a matter which is sub judice or is offensive or defamatory in nature). Some of the possible outcomes following consideration by the Committee are as follows:

- the referral of a petition to the Ombudsman, another Ombudsman or a regulatory public body or a body established for the purpose of redress;
- the referral of a petition to any other Joint Committee with a request for further consideration and report back to the Committee, once the matter has been considered by the Committee and it has been concluded to be of sufficient importance to require additional consideration;
- the making of a report made to the Houses of the Oireachtas with recommendations, including a request that the report be debated by the Dáil.

The Joint Committee is also required to consider such matters as may be referred to it by the Houses of the Oireachtas from time to time.

The Joint Committee may take oral and written evidence and print and publish from time to time minutes of such evidence taken in public before it together with such related documents as it thinks fit, invite and accept written submissions from interested persons or bodies, draft recommendations for legislative change and for new legislation, request a member of the Government or Minister of State to attend before it to discuss

(a) policy or

(b) proposed primary or secondary legislation (prior to such legislation being published) for which he or she is officially responsible

The Joint Committee may also request principal office holders in bodies in the State which are partly or wholly funded by the State, or which are established or appointed by members of the Government, or by the Oireachtas to attend meetings of the Committee, as appropriate, to discuss issues for which they are officially responsible and which relates to a submitted petition.

The Orders of Reference of the Dáil Select Committee and Joint Committee are set out at Appendix 1

3. Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Membership

Dáil SO 93(2) provides for a proportion of Chairs to be allocated to each group by means of the D'Hondt System. Deputy Sean Sherlock was appointed as Chairman of the Select Committee on 20th July, 2016 by a Resolution of Dáil Éireann. The Chairman of the Select Committee is also the Chairman of the Joint Committee. Senator Colette Kelleher was elected as Vice-Chairman of the Joint Committee on the 15th November 2016.

Membership of the Committee, including all internal changes within the reported period, is listed at *Appendix 2.*

4. Meetings, Attendance and Recording

Meetings of the Joint Committee and Select Committee took place in the Committee rooms in Leinster House 2000. Meetings were in public unless otherwise ordered by the Committee.

Committee proceedings were broadcast live within Leinster House and also made available to RTE, TV3 and TG4. Proceedings were also webcast making them available worldwide on the internet. Since September 2014, the proceedings of Committees in public session, typically recorded but occasionally live, are broadcast on the dedicated parliamentary channel Oireachtas TV which is available on these channels:

- Saorview 22, Sky 574, Virgin Media 207, eir Vision 504
- Vodaphone Channels 201, 207 and 208

An Official Report (Parliamentary Debates) of the public meetings of the Committee may be viewed on the Houses of the Oireachtas website at www.oireachtas.ie.

5. Number and Duration of Meetings

5.1 Joint Committee

The Joint Committee met on 16 occasions during the period under report. The number of hours of discussion involved in these meetings was in excess of 14.67 hours.

The subject matter of each meeting of the Joint Committee, is detailed in Appendix 3. The Minutes of Proceedings of the Joint Committee in public session are attached at Appendix 4.

6. Witnesses attending before the Committee

During the period under report, the number of speaking witnesses for the Committees was as follows:

there were 21 speaking witnesses before the Committee.

7. Committee Reports Published

During the period under report, the Select or Joint Committee agreed 2 reports -

(i) Annual Report 2016

(ii) Work Programme

8. Travel

During the period under report, the Select or Joint Committee did not undertake any travel.

9. Report on Functions and Powers

The Standing Orders of the Joint Committee on Public Petitions were amended by the Dáil on the 17th of January 2017 and 28th of March 2017 and by the Seanad on the 13 April 2017.

The Joint Committee is currently satisfied with its present procedures and role.

Sean Sherlock T.D.
Chairman
7 February 2018

APPENDIX 1: Orders of Reference

An Comhchoiste um Achainíocha ón bPobal

"111A. (1) Beidh arna bhunú, i ndiaidh ationól na Dála tar éis Olltoghcháin, Buan-Choiste, a chomhcheanglófar le Coiste dá shamhail de chuid Sheanad Éireann, chun bheith ina Chomhchoiste um Achainíocha ón bPobal, chun breithniú a dhéanamh ar an méid seo a leanas—

(*a*) achainíocha ón bpobal a bheidh dírithe chuig Tithe an Oireachtais agus a bheidh arna dtarchur chuig an gCoiste de réir Bhuan-Orduithe 111B go 111E, go huile;

(*b*) cibé nithe eile a tharchuirfidh Tithe an Oireachtais chuig an gCoiste; agus

(*c*) aon nithe gaolmhara eile.

(1A) Féadfaidh an Coiste freisin breithniú a dhéanamh ar ní is díol imní nó spéise don phobal i gcoitinne i ndáil le cumhachtaí reachtacha Thithe an Oireachtais nó le saincheist beartais phoiblí: Ar choinníoll go rachaidh Cathaoirleach an Chomhchoiste, roimh thosach an bhreithnithe sin, i gcomhairle leis an gCoiste iomchuí arna bhunú de bhun Bhuan-Ordú 84A.

(2) Seacht gcomhalta de Dháil Éireann a bheidh ar an mBuan-Choiste. Ceathrar is córam don Chomhchoiste, ar comhalta de Dháil Éireann duine amháin díobh ar a laghad agus ar comhalta de Sheanad Éireann duine amháin díobh ar a laghad. Beidh Cathaoirleach an Chomhchoiste ina chomhalta nó ina comhalta de Dháil Éireann.

(3) Beidh na cumhachtaí seo a

Joint Committee on Public Petitions

"111A. (1) There shall stand established, following the reassembly of the Dáil subsequent to a General Election, a Standing Committee, which shall be joined with a similar Committee of Seanad Éireann, to form the Joint Committee on Public Petitions, to consider—

(*a*) public petitions addressed to the Houses of the Oireachtas which shall stand referred to the Committee in accordance with Standing Orders 111B to 111E, inclusive;

(*b*) such other matters as may be referred to the Committee by the Houses of the Oireachtas; and

(*c*) any other related matters.

(1A) The Committee may also consider a matter of general public concern or interest in relation to the legislative powers of the Houses of the Oireachtas or an issue of public policy: Provided that prior to the commencement of such consideration, the Chairman of the Joint Committee shall consult with the relevant Committee established pursuant to Standing Order 84A.

(2) The Standing Committee shall consist of seven members of Dáil Éireann. The quorum of the Joint Committee shall be four, of whom at least one shall be a member of Dáil Éireann and one a member of Seanad Éireann. The Chairman of the Joint Committee shall be a member of Dáil Éireann.

(3) The Joint Committee shall have

leanas ag an gComhchoiste:

(*a*) na cumhachtaí a mhínítear i mBuan-Ordú 85, seachas míreanna (2A), (4A), (4B), (6A) agus (6B) den Bhuan-Ordú sin; agus

(*b*) cumhacht chun aon ní a bheidh arna bhreithniú aige (agus ar cinneadh dóthain tábhachta a bheith leis chun go bhfuil gá le breithniú breise) a tharchur chuig an gComhchoiste iomchuí a bheidh arna cheapadh faoi Bhuan-Ordú 84A chun é a bhreithniú tuilleadh agus tuairisciú don Choiste.

(4) Beidh feidhm ag forálacha Bhuan-Ordú 95, seachas mír (1) den Bhuan-Ordú sin, maidir leis an gComhchoiste.

(5) Féadfaidh an Comhchoiste dul i mbun plé leis an gCoiste um Achainíocha de chuid Pharlaimint na hEorpa, lena n-áirítear plé i ndáil le Tionscnamh Eorpach na Saoránach.

(6) Beidh sé ina threoir don Chomhchoiste nach mbreithneoidh sé aon ní a bheidh á bhreithniú ag an gCoiste um Chuntais Phoiblí, nó ar thug an Coiste sin fógra faoi á rá go bhfuil beartaithe aige é a bhreithniú, i bhfeidhmiú a fheidhmeanna faoi Bhuan-Ordú 186 agus/nó Acht an Ard Reachtaire Cuntas agus Ciste (Leasú), 1993.

(7) Ullmhóidh an Comhchoiste clár oibre bliantúil agus tuarascáil bhliantúil, mar atá leagtha amach i mBuan-Ordú 89, agus leagfar iad faoi bhráid dhá Theach an Oireachtais.

111B. (1) Féadfar achainí a dhíriú chuig Tithe an Oireachtais maidir le ní is díol imní nó spéise don phobal i gcoitinne i ndáil lena gcumhachtaí reachtacha nó le saincheist beartais phoiblí.

the following powers:

(*a*) the powers defined in Standing Order 85, other than paragraphs (2A), (4A), (4B), (6A) and (6B) thereof; and

(*b*) power to refer any matter which has been considered by it (and which has been concluded to be of sufficient importance to require additional consideration) to the relevant Joint Committee appointed under Standing Order 84A for further consideration and report back to the Committee.

(4) The provisions of Standing Order 95, other than paragraph (1) thereof, shall apply to the Joint Committee.

(5) The Joint Committee may engage with the Committee on Petitions of the European Parliament including in relation to the European Citizens' Initiative.

(6) It shall be an instruction to the Joint Committee that it shall not consider any matter which is being considered, or of which notice has been given of a proposal to consider, by the Committee of Public Accounts in the exercise of its functions under Standing Order 186 and/or the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act 1993.

(7) The Joint Committee shall prepare an annual work programme and an annual report as outlined in Standing Order 89, which shall be laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas.

111B. (1) A petition may be addressed to the Houses of the Oireachtas on a matter of general public concern or interest in relation to their legislative powers or an issue of public policy.

(2) Féadfaidh pearsa aonair, comhlacht corpraithe nó comhlachas neamhchorpraithe daoine achainí a thaisceadh.

(3) Luafar go soiléir in achainí—

(*a*) ainm an achainígh;

(*b*) seoladh de chuid an achainígh ar chóir gach comhfhreagras a bhaineann leis an achainí a sheoladh chuige; agus

(*c*) ainm agus seoladh aon duine atá ag tacú leis an achainí.

(4) Beidh gach achainí a dhíreofar chuig Tithe an Oireachtais arna tarchur chuig an gComhchoiste um Achainíocha ón bPobal (dá ngairtear 'an Coiste' sa Bhuan-Ordú seo agus i mBuan-Orduithe 111C, D agus E).

(5) Cinnfidh an Coiste, ó am go ham—

(*a*) foirm chuí achainíocha;

(*b*) an modh ar a dtaiscfear achainíocha leis na Tithe; agus

(*c*) cibé nithe eile i ndáil le hachainíocha a bhreithniú is cuí leis an gCoiste agus nach ndéantar foráil lena n-aghaidh ar shlí eile sna Buan-Orduithe seo.

111C. (1) Tá achainí inghlactha mura rud é—

(*a*) go n-iarrtar léi ar an Dáil aon ní a dhéanamh seachas ní a bhfuil cumhacht ag an Dáil é a dhéanamh;

(*b*) nach gcomhlíonann sí na Buan-Orduithe nó nach bhfuil sí i bhfoirm chuí ar shlí eile;

(*c*) go bhfuil sí *sub judice* de réir bhrí Bhuan-Ordú 59;

(2) A petition may be lodged by an individual person, a body corporate or an unincorporated association of persons.

(3) A petition shall clearly indicate—

(*a*) the name of the petitioner;

(*b*) an address of the petitioner to which all communications concerning the petition should be sent; and

(*c*) the name and address of any person supporting the petition.

(4) All petitions addressed to the Houses of the Oireachtas shall stand referred to the Joint Committee on Public Petitions (referred to in this Standing Order and Standing Orders 111C, D and E as 'the Committee').

(5) The Committee shall, from time to time, determine—

(*a*) the proper form of petitions;

(*b*) the manner in which petitions are to be lodged with the Houses; and

(*c*) such other matters in relation to the consideration of petitions as the Committee considers appropriate and which are not otherwise provided for in these Standing Orders.

111C. (1) A petition is admissible unless it—

(*a*) requests the Dáil to do anything other than the Dáil has power to do;

(*b*) does not comply with Standing Orders or is otherwise not in proper form;

(*c*) is *sub judic*e within the meaning of Standing Order

(*d*) go bhfuil ainm nó ainmneacha pearsan aonair inti;

(*e*) go bhfuil teanga inti atá maslach nó ar de chineál clúmhillteach í;

(*f*) gurb ionann í agus achainí, nó go bhfuil sí i dtéarmaí atá go substaintiúil de shamhail achainí, a thionscain an duine céanna, an comhlacht corpraithe céanna nó an comhlachas neamhchorpraithe céanna, nó a tionscnaíodh thar a cheann nó thar a ceann, le linn shaolré na Dála sin agus a dúnadh le comhaontú an Choiste;

(*g*) go bhfuil sí suaibhreosach, cráiteach nó gur mí-úsáid ar an gcóras achainíocha í ar shlí eile; agus

(*h*) go gceanglaítear léi ar an gCoiste gearán aonair a bhreithniú ab ábhar do chinneadh ó Ombudsman, nó ó chomhlacht rialála poiblí nó comhlacht arna bhunú chun críche sásaimh.

(2) I ndáil le hachainíocha inghlactha, i gcás achainí ina bpléitear—

(*a*) le nithe áitiúla nó réigiúnacha; nó

(*b*) le nithe ar mó is cuí do chomhlacht rialála poiblí nó comhlacht arna bhunú chun críche sásaimh iad;

suífidh an Coiste gur úsáid an t achainíoch na bealaí achomhairc nó sásaimh go léir atá ar fáil sula mbreithneoidh an Coiste an ní.

(3) Breithneoidh an Coiste agus cinnfidh sé i gcás díospóide an

59;

(*d*) contains the name or names of individuals;

(*e*) contains language which is offensive or in the nature of being defamatory;

(*f*) is the same as, or in substantially similar terms to, a petition brought by or on behalf of the same person, body corporate or unincorporated association during the lifetime of that Dáil and which was closed by agreement of the Committee;

(*g*) is frivolous, vexatious or otherwise constitutes an abuse of the petitions system; and

(*h*) requires the Committee to consider an individual complaint which has been the subject of a decision by an Ombudsman, or by a regulatory public body or a body established for the purpose of redress.

(2) In relation to admissible petitions, where a petition deals with—

(*a*) local or regional matters; or

(*b*) matters which are more appropriate to a regulatory public body or a body established for the purpose of redress;

the Committee shall establish that all available avenues of appeal or redress have been utilised by the petitioner prior to the Committee considering the matter.

(3) The Committee shall consider and decide in a case of dispute

bhfuil achainí inghlactha agus tabharfaidh sé fógra don achainíoch faoina chinneadh agus faoi na cúiseanna atá leis an gcinneadh sin.

111D. (1) Má tá achainí inghlactha, déanfaidh an Coiste cibé gníomh is cuí leis i ndáil leis an achainí sin.

(2) Gan dochar do ghinearáltacht mhír (1), féadfaidh an Coiste—

(*a*) an achainí a tharchur chuig Ombudsman nó chuig comhlacht rialála poiblí nó comhlacht arna bhunú chun críche sásaimh;

(*b*) an achainí a tharchur chuig aon Choiste eile is cuí leis, mar aon le hiarraidh go ndéanfar í a bhreithniú tuilleadh agus tuairisciú don Choiste; agus

(*c*) tuarascáil a thabhairt don Dáil mar aon le moltaí, lena n-áirítear iarraidh go ndéanfaidh an Dáil díospóireacht ar an tuarascáil.

(3) Tabharfaidh an Coiste fógra don achainíoch faoi aon ghníomh a dhéanfar faoi mhír (2).

111E. (1) Féadfaidh an Coiste achainí a dhúnadh aon tráth.

(2) I gcás go ndúnfaidh an Coiste achainí, tabharfaidh sé fógra don achainíoch go bhfuil an achainí dúnta agus faoi na cúiseanna ar dúnadh í.

111F. I gcás nach ndéanfaidh Roghchoiste, faoi Bhuan-Ordú 84A(8)(b), tuarascáil Ombudsman, nó cuid nó codanna di, a bhreithniú laistigh de thréimhse dhá mhí (gan tréimhsí sosa na Nollag, na Cásca nó an tsamhraidh a chur san áireamh) tar éis an tuarascáil a leagan faoi bhráid ceachtar Tí den

whether a petition is admissible and shall notify the petitioner of its decision and of the reasons for that decision.

111D. (1) If a petition is admissible, the Committee shall take such action as it considers appropriate in relation to that petition.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Committee may—

(*a*) refer the petition to an Ombudsman or a regulatory public body or a body established for the purpose of redress;

(*b*) refer the petition to any other Committee as it considers appropriate, with a request for further consideration and report back to the Committee; and

(*c*) report to the Dáil with recommendations, including a request that the report be debated by the Dáil.

(3) The Committee shall notify the petitioner of any action taken under paragraph (2).

111E. (1) The Committee may close a petition at any time.

(2) Where the Committee closes a petition it shall notify the petitioner that the petition is closed and of the reasons for closing it.

111F. Where a Select Committee does not under Standing Order 84A(8)(b) consider an Ombudsman report, or a portion or portions thereof, within two months (excluding Christmas, Easter or summer recess periods) of the report being laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas, the

Oireachtas nó faoi bhráid an dá Theach sin, cromfaidh an Coiste ar an tuarascáil Ombudsman, nó aon chodanna di nach mbeidh breithnithe ag an Roghchoiste, a bhreithniú.”,

Committee shall proceed to consider the Ombudsman report, or any portions thereof not considered by the Select Committee.”.

APPENDIX 2: Membership

List of Members of the Joint Committee

Chairman:	Sean Sherlock (LAB)
Deputies:	Shane Cassells (FF)
	Martin Heydon (FG)
	Denise Mitchell (SF)
	Dara Murphy (FG)
	Eugene Murphy (FF)
	Brendan Ryan (LAB)
Senators:	Jerry Buttimer (FG)
	Colette Kelleher (CEG) [Vice-Chairperson]
	Diarmuid Wilson (FF)

Notes:

1. Deputies nominated by the Dáil Committee of Selection and appointed by Order of the Dáil of 12 July 2016.
2. Senators appointed to the Committee by the Seanad Committee of Selection and appointed by Order of the Seanad on 21st July 2016
3. Deputy Dara Murphy was elected in place of Deputy John Paul Phelan on 28 September 2017
4. Senator Denis Landy resigned from Seanad Eiréann on 28 November 2017

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APPENDIX 3: Meetings of the Joint Committee

The following are the details, in date order, of the scheduled meetings of the Joint Committee which took place during the period under report.

Meeting No. and Date	Topic	Organisations, Groups, Individuals who attended and petitions considered
J04 - 25/01/2017	Consideration of public petitions received and recording of decisions agreed	Petition No P00020/16 Petition No P00026/16 Petition No P00029/16 Petition No P00035/16
J05 - 22/02/2017	Consideration of public petitions received and recording of decisions agreed	Petition No P00021/16 Petition No P00022/16 Petition No P00023/16 Petition No P00025/16 Petition No P00005/17 Petition No P00006/17
J06 - 08/03/2017	Promoting awareness of the Public Petitions Process	*Citizens Information Board:* • Ms. Angela Black • Mr. Graham Long • Ms. Louise Loughlin
J07 22/03/2017	Engagement with the Financial Services Ombudsman arising from Public Petition No. P00035/16 and the Financial Services Ombudsman Annual Report 2015	*Financial Services Ombudsman:* • Mr. Ger Deering • Ms. Elaine Cassidy
J08 05/04/2017	Consideration of public petitions received and recording of decisions agreed	Petition No P00024/16 Petition No P00036/16 Petition No P00038/16 Petition No P00001/17 Petition No P00003/17 Petition No P00004/17 Petition No P00013/17
J09 03/05/2017	Consideration of public petitions received and recording of decisions agreed	Petition No P00034/16 Petition No P00002/17 Petition No P00005/17 Petition No P00016/17

Meeting No. and Date	Topic	Organisations, Groups, Individuals who attended and petitions considered
J10 17/05/2017	Consideration of public petitions received and recording of decisions agreed	Petition No P00034/16 Petition No P00023/16 Petition No P00003/17 Petition No P00009/17 Petition No P00011/17 Petition No P00020/17
J11 31/05/2017	Consideration of public petitions received and recording of decisions agreed	Petition No P00024/16 Petition No P00036/16 Petition No P00001/17 Petition No P00008/17 Petition No P00015/17 Petition No P00017/17 Petition No P00019/17
J12 14/06/2017	Cancelled	Not Applicable
J13 28/06/2017	Public Petition No P00013/17 "Make the new English Junior Cert Exam fairer by adding thirty extra minutes"	*State Examination Commission:* • Mr. Aidan Farrell • Dr. Tim Desmond • Ms. Andrea Feeney *Department of Education and Skills:* • Mr. Gary O Donnchadha • Mr. Eamonn Moran
J14 12/07/2017	Consideration of public petitions received and recording of decisions agreed	Petition No P00024/16 Petition No P00001/17 Petition No P00002/17 Petition No P00007/17 Petition No P00010/17 Petition No P00023/17
J15 27/09/2017	Consideration of public petitions received and recording of decisions agreed	Petition No P00007/17 Petition No P00012/17 Petition No P00019/17 Petition No P00024/17 Petition No P00030/17 Petition No P00032/17
J16 11/10/2017	Discontinued Mobility Allowance and Motorised Transport Schemes	*Department of Health:* • Finian McGrath, Minister of State for Disability
J17 25/10/2017	Consideration of public petitions received and recording of decisions agreed	Petition No P00031/16 Petition No P00037/16 Petition No P00013/17 Petition No P00023/17 Petition No P00030/17

Meeting No. and Date	Topic	Organisations, Groups, Individuals who attended and petitions considered
J18 08/11/2017	Consideration of public petitions received and recording of decisions agreed	Petition No P00020/16 Petition No P00024/16 Petition No P00024/17 Petition No P00027/17 Petition No P00029/17
J19 22/11/2017	Public Petition No P000013/17 "Make the new English Junior Cert Exam fairer by adding thirty extra minutes"	• Ms. Tara O'Sullivan • Ms. Adrianne Ward • Ms. Ellen McKimm • Ms. Faye Dolan
J20 06/12/2017	Consideration of public petitions received and recording of decisions agreed	Petition No P00021/16 Petition No P00013/17 Petition No P00028/17

APPENDIX 4: Minutes of Proceedings of the Joint Committee

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 25 JANUARY 2017

The Joint Committee met in **private session** at 13:36 pm in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Martin Hayden, Denise Mitchell, Eugene Murphy, and Sean Sherlock (in the Chair).

Senators: Jerry Buttimer, Collette Kelleher, Denis Landy and Diarmuid Wilson.

In Private Session

2. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

6. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

In Public Session

The meeting continued in public session to (a) record the decisions of the Committee in relation to public petitions received, and (b) discuss the decision of the sub-Committee on Dáil Reform in relation to broadening the remit of the Committee.

8. Decisions on Public Petitions Received

The decisions of the Committee in relation to each petition were recorded in public session as follows:

8.1 [Petition No. P00020/16] – Negotiating Norms (Mr. Desmond Lafferty)

It was agreed to, (1) inform the petitioner of the changes to the remit of the Committee in relation to its engagement with an Ombudsman, (2) inform him that this Committee will not revisit a decision taken by a previous Committee, as petitioners can re-submit a petition, and (3) write to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade requesting they outline the procedures followed in relation to complaints of this nature.

8.2 [Petition No. P00026/16] – Driving Test Requirements (Ms. Laura English)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response received from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport to the petitioner and close the petition.

8.3 [Petition No. P00029/16] – Reduce Maximum Working Week to 40 hours (Mr. Oisin Tuohey)

It was agreed to, to forward a copy of the response received from the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation to the petitioner and close the petition.

8.4 [Petition No. P00035/16] – Financial Ombudsman Review (Mr. David Geary)

It was agreed to, (1) inform the petitioner of SO 111C (1) (h), which will preclude the Committee from examining parts of the petition, (2) forward a copy of the response from the Financial Services Ombudsman to the petitioner, (3) close the petition, and (4) to invite the Financial Services Ombudsman to appear before the Committee to discuss the outcome of the Independent Strategic and Operational Review and it's progress to date and into the future.

9. ROLE AND REMIT OF THE COMMITTEE

It was agreed to:

1. Write to the sub-Committee on Dáil Reform, outlining the dissatisfaction of the Committee in relation to its decision concerning broadening the remit of the Committee;
2. Request a meeting with the sub-Committee;
3. Carry out research on international best practice and examples of the role played by other parliaments in giving members of the public an opportunity to have their say and address pertinent issues; and
4. Following consideration of this research the Committee could consider travelling in the future to visit other parliaments on a fact finding tour.

10. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 14:48 pm *sine die.*

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Sean Sherlock T.D.
Chairman
22 February, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:37 pm in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Denise Mitchell, Brendan Ryan and Sean Sherlock (in the Chair).

Senators: Jerry Buttimer, Collette Kelleher and Diarmuid Wilson.

Apologies were received from Deputy Shane Cassells.

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed to go into private session at 13.37 pm.

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

6. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

8. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

9. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

10. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee went out of private session

In Public Session

The meeting continued in public session to record the decisions of the Committee in relation to public petitions received.

11. Decisions on Public Petitions

The decisions of the Committee in relation to each petition were recorded in public session as follows:

11.1 [Petition No. P00021/16] – Investigate circumstances relating to flawed implementation of fishing Legislation (Mr. Michael Callanan)

It was agreed, that the Committee were satisfied with all aspects of this case except with one of the test cases mentioned by the petitioner, therefore, it was further agreed to correspond with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, requesting it confirm that all successful applicants who obtained a Fishing License under either the Decommissioning Scheme or the Scheme for the Licensing of Traditional Pot Fishing Boats, fully met with the following qualifying criteria:

(a) demonstrated a track record in commercial sea fishing by means of pots in the Irish Inshore; and

(b) were not in full time employment outside of the fishing industry.

11.2 [Petition No. P00022/16] – Ireland should join the Antarctic Treaty (Ms. Rose Waldron)
It was agreed, following consideration of a response from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to forward a copy of this response to the petitioner, and close the petition.

11.3 [Petition No. P00023/16] – Acknowledgement of, and response to, correspondence by Government Ministers (Mr. Norman Wilson)
It was agreed to forward a copy of the response from the Department to the petitioner. It was also agreed, to refer the petition to the Department of Justice and Equality for its consideration and to request a response in relation to the timelines listed in its Customer Service Charter for 2016 to 2018 when responding to correspondence received.

11.4 [Petition No. P00025/16] – Creating a Tobacco Free Generation (Mr. Robert Carty)
It was agreed, following consideration of the response from the Department of Health, to forward a copy of this response to the petitioner, and close the petition.

11.5 [Petition No. P00005/17] – Make co-operation with Trump administration conditional on human rights (Ms. Christine Cullen)
It was agreed, that the suggestion made by the petition is a matter of public policy and is therefore within the remit of the Committee. It was further agreed, to refer the petition to the Department of the Taoiseach for consideration and report back.

11.6 [Petition No. P00006/17] – Stop the Taoiseach attending St. Patrick's Day event with Donald Trump (Ms. Grace Holmes)
It was agreed to deem the petition inadmissible as per Standing Order 111B (1) as this suggestion is not a matter of public concern in relation to legislative powers, nor is it a matter of public policy. It was further agreed the petition is also inadmissible as per Standing Order 111C (1) (*a*) as this is a request to Dáil Éireann to do something that it does not have the power to do, i.e. to manage the diary of the Taoiseach.

12. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 14:48 pm until Wednesday 08 March 2017 at 1.30 pm.

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Senator Colette Kelleher
08 March, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 08 MARCH 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:36 pm in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Martin Hayden, John Lahart* Denise Mitchell and Shane Cassells

Senators: Jerry Buttimer, Collette Kelleher (in the Chair) and Lorraine Clifford Lee**

*In substitution for Eugene Murphy
**In substitution for Diarmuid Wilson

Apologies were received from Deputy Sean Sherlock and Senator Diarmuid Wilson.

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed to go into private session at 13.38 pm

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee went out of private session

In Public Session

The meeting continued in public session.

6. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 13.48 p.m. until 13.49 p.m.

7. PROMOTING AWARENESS OF THE PUBLIC PETITIONS PROCESS

The Committee took oral evidence from representatives of the Citizen's Information Board – Ms Angela Black, Chief Executive Officer, Mr Graham Long, Senior Manager and Ms Louise Loughlin, National Manager, National Advocacy Service for People with disabilities, in relation to promoting awareness of the public petitions process.

Debate ensued and concluded.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 14:28 pm until Wednesday 22 March 2017 at 1.30 pm.

Sean Sherlock T.D.
Chairman
22 March, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 22 MARCH 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:31 pm in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Shane Cassells. Denise Mitchell, Eugene Murphy and Seán Sherlock (in the Chair)

Senators: Jerry Buttimer and Collette Kelleher

Apologies were received from Deputy Martin Hayden and Senator Diarmuid Wilson

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed to go into private session at 13.32 pm

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee went out of private session

6. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 13.40 p.m. until 13.42 p.m.

7. ENGAGEMENT WITH THE FINANCIAL SERVICE OMBUDSMAN

The Committee took oral evidence from the Financial Services Ombudsman – Mr Ger Deering, and the Deputy Financial Services Ombudsman Ms Elaine Cassidy, in relation to the three year Change Programme currently in operation.

Debate ensued and concluded. It was agreed that a timeframe should be sought as to the progression of the required legislation to allow the amalgamation of the Office of the Financial Services Ombudsman with the Office of the Pensions Ombudsman.

8. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 14.36 p.m. until 14.37 p.m.

The Committee went out of public session

9. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

10. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

11. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

12. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

13. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 14:47 pm until Wednesday 05 April 2017, at 13.30 pm.

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Seán Sherlock T.D.
Chairman
05 April, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 05 APRIL 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:35 pm in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Shane Cassells, Denise Mitchell, Eugene Murphy, and Seán Sherlock (in the Chair).

Senators: Collette Kelleher

Apologies were received from Deputy Martin Hayden, Senators Jerry Buttimer, Denis Landy and Diarmuid Wilson.

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed to go into private session at 13:36 pm.

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

In Public Session

The meeting continued in public session at 13:51 p.m. to record the decisions of the Committee.

4. Decisions on Public Petitions

4.1 [Petition No. P00024/16] – Criteria in order to qualify for a Primary Medical Certificate (Mr. Thomas Mackey)

It was agreed, to invite Minister Finian McGrath, Minister of State for Disability Issues, to appear before the Committee to discuss the issues raised in the petition.

4.2 [Petition No. P00036/16] – A Regulator to be set up for the gambling/gaming industry (Mr. Neil Tolan)

It was agreed, to (1) Correspond with the Department of Justice and Equality and request that they outline a proposed timeline for the introduction of a new executive agency that will act as both the licensing authority and regulator for the gambling sector and to keep the Committee updated on any progress in this regard; 2. Forward a copy of the response from the Department to the petitioner; and 3. The petition will remain open to await the outcome of the Gambling Control Bill 2013.

4.3 [Petition No. P00038/16] – Stop the use of Depot medroxyprogesterone acetate (Depo Provera) in Ireland (Ms. Abigail Mulligan)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Health Products Regulatory Authority to the petitioner and close the petition.

4.4 [Petition No. P00001/17] – Responsible service of alcohol (Mr. Oisin Turakhia)

It was agreed, to write to the petitioner to seek further evidence.

4.5 [Petition No. P00003/17] – Public consultation on the feasibility of developing a hemp industry (Mr. Brian Houlihan)

It was agreed, to correspond with Teagasc and request an update on recommendations from the 2009 Future of the Industry study on the development of a hemp industry in Ireland.

4.6 [Petition No. P00004/17] – Equality for School Secretaries (Mr. Frank Considine)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Department of Education and Skills to the petitioner and close the petition.

4.7 [Petition No. P00013/17] – Make the new English Junior Cert Exam fairer by adding thirty extra minutes (Ms. Tara O'Sullivan)

It was agreed, to invite the Officials from the Department of Education and Skills and the State Examinations Commission to appear before the Committee to discuss how the Mock Examination papers provided by commercial suppliers to schools will be scrutinised in advance of sale to schools. It was further agreed to invite the petitioner to attend this meeting.

The Committee went out of public session at 13:57 p.m.

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

6. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

8. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

9. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

10. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 14:03 pm until Wednesday 03 May 2017 at 1.30 pm.

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Seán Sherlock T.D.
Chairman
03 May, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 03 MAY 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:33 pm in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Denise Mitchell, Eugene Murphy, and Seán Sherlock (in the Chair), Michael Harty.

Senators: Collette Kelleher

Apologies were received from Deputy Shane Cassells, Senators Jerry Buttimer, and Diarmuid Wilson.

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed to go into private session at 13:34 pm

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

6. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

8. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

In Public Session

The meeting continued in public session at 13:56 p.m. to record the decisions of the Committee.

9. Decisions on Public Petitions

9.1 [Petition No. P00034/16] – Lack of Appeal Opportunity for Pension Assessment (Mr. Joseph O'Shea)

It was agreed to:

1. Correspond once again with the Department to seek clarification if the Minister has responsibility for approving all applications to the scheme or only cases where the initial decision has been appealed;
2. Ask the Department to correspond with the petitioner outlining the policy element of the petition;
3. Correspond with the Pensions Ombudsman to ascertain his view on an appeals mechanism to appeal decisions of the Minister for Justice on the determination of the level of disablement under the Garda Pensions Order 1925. Once this information has been received a research paper should be prepared by the Secretariat; and
4. Examine the procedures followed by the Defence Forces when processing applications for a special pension, where the applicant was injured in the line of duty.

9.2 [Petition No. P00002/17] – Civil Rights for Civil Servants (Mr. Thomas Geraghty

It was agreed to correspond with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to ascertain the following:

1. Its views on amending the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour, to provide an explanation as to the political activity that is prohibited under the code, and the disciplinary action that is applicable when civil servants take part in Political Activity
2. Whether the Department would consider the drafting of legislation to deal with (1) above
3. It is further proposed to forward a copy of the response from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission to the petitioner and the petition will remain open.

9.3 [Petition No. P00005/17] – Make co-operation with Trump administration conditional on human rights from (Ms. Christine Cullen).

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, along with a copy of the Taoiseach's speech to the petitioner and close the petition.

9.4[Petition No. P00016/17] – The Cost of Irish Passports (Mr. Norman Wilson).

It was agreed to, forward a copy of the response received from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to the petitioner and close the petition.

10. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 14:03 pm until Wednesday 17 May 2017 at 1.30 pm.

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Senator Colette Kelleher
Vice-Chair
17 May, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 17 MAY 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:38 pm in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Shane Cassells, Martin Hayden, Denise Mitchell, Eugene Murphy, and John Paul Phelan.

Senators: Jerry Buttimer and Collette Kelleher (in the Chair)

Apologies were received from Deputy Seán Sherlock and Senator Diarmuid Wilson.

2. VICE-CHAIR CHAIRING THE MEETING

It was agreed, that as per Standing Order 93(3) of Dáil Éireann and 73(2) of Seanad Éireann, the Vice-Chair, Senator Collette Kelleher would Chair the meeting in the unavoidable absence of the Chairman.

3. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed to go into private session at 13:39 pm

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

6. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

8. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

9. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

In Public Session

The meeting continued in public session at 14:16 p.m. to record the decisions of the Committee.

10. Decisions on Public Petitions

[Petition No. P00034/16] – Lack of Appeal Opportunity for Pension Assessment (Mr. Joseph O'Shea)

It was agreed to correct the record in relation to a recommendation read out in the public section part of the meeting on 03 May 2017. The recommendation should have been that the Department should respond to the Committee and not the petitioner.

10.1 [Petition No. P00023/16] – Acknowledgement of, and response to, correspondence by government ministers (Mr. Norman Wilson)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the responses from the Department of Justice and Equality and An Garda Síochána to the petitioner and close the petition

10.2 [Petition No. P00003/17] – Public consultation on the feasibility of developing a hemp industry from (Mr. Brian Houlihan).

It was agreed, to (1) correspond with the Department and request a timeline on its examination of the issue of growing hemp commercially in Ireland as soon as it is available and request that the Committee be updated on any progress in this regard; (2) Forward a copy of the response from the Department to the Petitioner; and (3) The Petition will remain open and the secretariat will request an update from the Department within three months from the date of the meeting.

10.3[Petition No. P00009/17] – Assigning mandatory community service to people claiming job seeker's allowance at minimum wage rate or greater (Mr. Daniel Hutson)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Department to the petitioner and close the petition

10.4 [Petition No. P00011/17] – To re-route the Leinster Orbital North of Navan away from the Tara and Bru Na Boinne archaeological landscapes and to create a legally binding mechanism to allow early intervention in the case of large infrastructure affecting areas of National importance (Ms. Pauline Bleach)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Department to the petitioner and close the petition.

10.5 [Petition No. P00020/17] – Assigning mandatory community service to people claiming job seeker's allowance at minimum wage rate or greater (Mr. Daniel Hutson).

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Office of the Ombudsman to the petitioner, correspond with the Office of the Ombudsman addressing issues raised in its response, and close the petition.

11. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 14:23 pm until Wednesday 31 May 2017 at 1.30 pm.

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Seán Sherlock
Chairman
31 May, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 31 MAY 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:39 pm in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Shane Cassells, Denise Mitchell, Eugene Murphy, John Paul Phelan and Seán Sherlock (in the Chair).

Senators: Jerry Buttimer and Diarmuid Wilson

Apologies were received from Senators Denis Landy and Colette Kelleher.

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed to go into private session at 13:40 pm

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

6. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

In Public Session

The meeting continued in public session at 13:49 p.m. to record the decisions of the Committee.

8. Decisions on Public Petitions

8.1 [Petition No. P00024/16] – Criteria in order to qualify for a primary medical certificate (Mr. Thomas Mackey)

It was agreed to correspond with the Ombudsman and seek his views on the scheme as it currently stands and request an input on the actions that could be taken to address the needs of the petitioner; and to correspond with the relevant advocacy groups seeking observations in relation to the current eligibility criteria of the Primary Medical Certificate.

8.2 [Petition No. P00036/16] – A regulator to be set up for the gambling/gaming (Mr. Neil Tolan)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Department to the petitioner and advise that the petition will remain open; and the Secretariat will correspond with the Department periodically to seek an update on the progression of legislation.

8.3 [Petition No. P00001/17] – Responsible service of alcohol (Mr. Oisin Turakhia)

It was agreed, to correspond once again with the petitioner informing him that if a response to the correspondence issued on behalf of the Committee is not received within two weeks of the date of the correspondence, then the petition will be closed.

8.4 Petition No. P00008/17] In relation to overgrown leylandii trees in neighbours garden. They are obtrusive to my property and other properties (Mr. Martin McGowan)

It was agreed, to (1) Correspond once again with the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, outlining that while the Committee welcomes the progression of the Mediation Bill 2017, this Bill does not address the issue of the absence of legislation to tackle overhanging trees; (2) The Committee further requests that the Department examine current Legislation and Regulations in the UK with a view to considering a system similar in Ireland; (3) The Committee also requests that the Department report back to the Committee; and (4) Forward a copy of the response from the Department to the Petitioner and advise of further steps being taken by the Committee.

8.5 [Petition No. P00015/17] Widening eligibility requirements for Irish Citizenship by descent (Mr. Marcus Fontaine)

It was agreed to, forward a copy of the response from the Department of Justice and Equality to the petitioner and close the petition.

8.6 [Petition No. P00017/17] Introduce refundable deposits on bottles and cans in Ireland (Mr. Mark Llewellyn)

It was agreed initially in the private session of the meeting to forward a copy of the response from the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment to the petitioner and close the petition. However, in the public session of the meeting it was further agreed, not to close the petition and to correspond once again with the relevant Sectoral Committee for a further examination of how Repak operates.

8.7 [Petition No. P00019/17] The Lough Foyle Ferry Service should be maintained by the Irish and British Governments (Mr. Johnny Anderson)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Department to the relevant Local Authorities seeking further information in relation to the funding of this service. It was further noted in light of Brexit that border areas should be protected, and the petition will remain open.

9. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 13:54 pm until Wednesday 31 May 2017 at 1.30 pm.

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Colette Kelleher
Vice-Chairperson
28 June, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 28 JUNE 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:35 pm in Committee Room 2, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Shane Cassells, Denise Mitchell, Eugene Murphy, and Brendan Ryan.

Senators: Jerry Buttimer and Collette Kelleher (in the Chair)

Apologies were received from Deputies Martin Hayden and Seán Sherlock.

2. VICE-CHAIR CHAIRING THE MEETING

It was agreed, that as per Standing Order 93(3) of Dáil Éireann and 73(2) of Seanad Éireann, the Vice-Chair, Senator Collette Kelleher would Chair the meeting in the unavoidable absence of the Chairman.

3. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed to go into private session at 13:36 pm

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

6. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee went out of private session at 14:01 p.m.

8. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 14:01 p.m. until 14:02 p.m.

9. ENGAGEMENT WITH OFFICIALS FROM THE STATE EXAMINATION COMMISSION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS

The Committee took oral evidence from Officials from the State Examination Commission and the Department of Education and Skills in relation to petition No P00013/17 from Ms. Tara O'Sullivan entitled "*Make the New English Junior Cert Exam fairer by adding Thirty Extra Minutes*".

Debate ensued and concluded.

10. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 15:11 p.m. until 15:12 p.m.

11. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed to go into private session at 15:12 pm

12. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

13. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 15:15 pm until Wednesday 12 July 2017 at 1:30 pm.

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Seán Sherlock
Chairman
12 July, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 12 JULY 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:35 pm in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Shane Cassells, Martin Hayden, Denise Mitchell, Eugene Murphy, Brendan Ryan and Seán Sherlock (in the Chair).

Senators: Colette Kelleher and Diarmuid Wilson

Apologies were received from Senator Jerry Buttimer.

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed to go into private session at 13:36 pm

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

6. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

8. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

In Public Session

The meeting continued in public session at 14:17 p.m. to record the decisions of the Committee.

9. Decisions on Public Petitions

9.1 [Petition No. P00024/16] – Criteria in order to qualify for a primary medical certificate (Mr. Thomas Mackey)

It was agreed, to correspond with the Minister for Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform expressing concerns as to the ridged eligibility criteria of the Scheme. It was further agreed to highlight to the Minister, the number of complaints received by the Ombudsman each year on this issue and the recommendation of the 2002 Report.

9.2 [Petition No. P00001/17] – Responsible service of alcohol (Mr. Oisin Turakhia)

It was agreed, to correspond with the petitioner and inform him that his petition is now closed, as the response from the Department has been previously provided to him.

9.3 [Petition No. P00002/17] – Civil rights for Civil Servants (Mr. Thomas Geraghty on behalf of the Public Service Executive Union)

It was agreed, to -

1. Correspond once again with the Minister acknowledging his detailed response and outline that the Committee welcomes his intentions to introduce a Public Sector Standards Commissioner under the proposed Public Sector Standards Bill and request that he keeps the Committee informed on progress on this matter;
2. Outline that the petition will remain open with the Committee intending on working closely with Public Sector Standards Commissioner on addressing any gaps in the current Circular and Codes on this matter; and

3. Forward a copy of the response from the Minister to the petitioner and advise of the above steps being taken.

9.4 [Petition No. P00007/17] Eradicate homework for children in Primary School (Mrs. Alexabdra Koster)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Department Education and Skills to the petitioner and invite her to comment on the response.

9.5 [Petition No. P00010/17] To make public consultation process a legal requirement and count for 20% of outcome. To create an independent arbitrator of Facts and Process with power to order revisions or rerun using correct processes and facts (Ms. Pauline Bleach)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government to the petitioner and close the petition.

9.6 [Petition No. P00023/17] Open an ASD Unit in all Primary and Secondary Schools (Ms. Judith Dunphy and Mr Shane Clarke)

It was agreed, to correspond once again with the Department and request the following:

- Correspond once again with the Department requesting that it outline the criteria required in order for a school to qualify for an ASD class;
- That it outlines the steps it takes to ensure that there are sufficient secondary school ASD units available to meet the needs of the students finishing primary schools in the catchment area where there are currently ASD units;
- If they could provide statistics on the geographical locations of all new ASD units in the past five years;
- Correspond with Autism Ireland (and/or other Autism Advocacy Groups) to ascertain their views on whether there is a need for ASD classes in all mainstream schools and if they have evidence of same; and
- Forward a copy of the response from the Department to the petitioner, advise them of the further steps being taken by the Committee and outline that this petition will remain open.

10. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 14:29 pm *sine die*

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Seán Sherlock
Chairman
27 September, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:33 pm in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Shane Cassells, Denise Mitchell, Eugene Murphy, and Seán Sherlock (in the Chair).

Senators: Colette Kelleher and Jerry Buttimer.

Apologies were received from Deputy Martin Hayden.

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed to go into private session at 13:34 pm

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

6. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 13:38 p.m. until 13:40 p.m.

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

8. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 14:29 p.m. until 14:30 p.m., and continued in private session to consider public petitions received.

9. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

In Public Session

The meeting went into public session at 14:36 p.m. to record the decisions of the Committee.

10. Decisions on Public Petitions

10.1 [Petition No. P00007/17] – Eradicate homework for children in Primary School (Mrs. Alexandra Koster)

It was agreed to,

1. Forward a copy of the response from the petitioner to the Minister for Education and Skills to establish if there is any intention to review the type of homework distributed to children in primary schools. Also seek clarification as to how the Department monitors schools engagement with parents and students in relation to establishing a homework policy;
2. Request that the petitioner substantiate her suggestion of the following:
   (a) there is **firm evidence based on extensive research** which suggests that homework for young children is of little or no educational benefit and can often be the cause of stress and anxiety from a young age; and

   (b) the teaching of young children should be play and activity based with lots of outdoor time and opportunities to physically move around. It is **research based** that both emotional and academic outcomes are better with such an approach.

10.2 [Petition No. P00012/17] – To devolve full legal responsibility and decision making for archaeology and heritage to the Heritage Council (Ms. Pauline Bleach)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, and the Heritage Council of Ireland to the petitioner and close the petition.

10.3 [Petition No. P00019/17] – The Lough Foyle ferry Service should be maintained by the British and Irish Government (Mr. Johnny Anderson)

It was agreed to,

1. Forward a copy of the response from Donegal County Council and Causeway & Glen Borough Council to the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport and outline that due the uncertainty of the effects of Brexit, the Committee recommends that the Department assist Donegal County Council in seeking funding for ferry services that have the potential to increase tourism in coastal areas;
2. Request that the Minister report any progress in relation to funding back to the Committee;
3. Correspond with the Northern Ireland Assembly (Stormont) in relation to the funding of this route;
4. Correspond with Donegal County Council and outline that the Committee will correspond with the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, and the Northern Ireland Assembly (Stormont), in relation to funding for ferry services that have the potential to increase tourism in coastal areas; and
5. Forward a copy of the responses received to the petitioner, and due to the uncertainty of Brexit and its impact on areas mentioned, the petition will remain open.

10.4 [Petition No. P00024/17] Regulatory action towards insurance claims and premiums (Mr. Christian Fuglsang)

It was agreed, the petition should remain open to monitor the progress of the implementation of the Action Plan by the Department of Finance.

10.5 [Petition No. P00030/17] Request for Amending Legislation relating to dog control (Ms. Arjita Chawla)

It was agreed to,

1. Correspond once again with the Department and request that clearer communication on this matter be available in each City Council and Local Authority public office. Also seek clarification of the enforcement powers relating to a Court decision under current legislation;
2. Correspond with the County and City Management Association and request that it also should contact all its members and suggest that clearer communication on this matter be available in each City Council and Local Authority public office; and
3. Forward a copy of the response from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government to the petitioner, informing her of the decision of the Committee in relation to the petition. Also request that she clarifies if she can provide proof of a decision of the Court not being executed.

10.6 [Petition No. P00032/17] Catalan Civil Rights Compromised (Frederic Vidal)

It was agreed, to deem the petition inadmissible as per Standing Orders 111C (1) (*a*), which states:

> *"A petition is admissible unless it— requests the Dáil to do anything other than the Dáil has power to do".*

11. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 14:49 pm *sine die*

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Collette Kelleher
Vice-Chair
11 October, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:32 p.m. in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Shane Cassells, Denise Mitchell, Dara Murphy and Brendan Ryan

Senators: Colette Kelleher (in the Chair) and Jerry Buttimer

Also in attendance were Senators John Dolan and John O'Mahony

Apologies were received from Deputies Martin Heydon and the Chairman Seán Sherlock.

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed, to go into private session at 13:33 pm to brief Members on the background to the Mobility Allowance and Motorised Transport Grant Schemes

3. PUBLIC SESSION

The meeting went into public session at 13:35 p.m.

4. ENGAGEMENT WITH MINISTER FINIAN MCGRATH MINISTER OF STATE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, IN RELATION TO THE DISCONTINUED MOBILITY ALLOWANCE AND MOTORISED TRANSPORT GRANT SCHEMES

The Committee met in public session with Minister Finian McGrath, Minister of State at the Department of Health, and his Officials to discuss the discontinued Mobility Allowance and the Motorised Transport Grant Schemes and the proposed Health (Transport Support) Bill.

Debate ensued and concluded.

It was agreed, that the Minister would provide additional information to the Committee. It was further agreed, that the Committee will correspond with the Minister for Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform requesting a timeframe as to the progress and initiation of the proposed Health (Transport Support) Bill.

5. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 14:51 p.m. until 14:52 p.m to allow the witnesses exit the meeting.

6. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed, to go into private session at 14:52 p.m.

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

8. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

9. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

10. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 15:01 pm until Wednesday 25th of October 2017, at 1.30 p.m.

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Seán Sherlock
Chairman
25 October, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 25 OCTOBER 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:37 p.m. in Committee Room 2, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Shane Cassells, Martin Heydon, Denise Mitchell and Séan Sherlock (in the Chair)

Senator: Colette Kelleher

Apologies were received from Deputies Dara Murphy, Eugene Murphy and Senators Jerry Buttimer and Denis Landy.

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed, to go into private session at 13:38 pm to deal with housekeeping matters

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

6. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

In Public Session

The meeting continued in public session at 13:52 p.m. to record the decisions of the Committee.

8. Decisions on Public Petitions

8.1 [Petition No. P00031/16] – Provision of Mosques and Islamic Education to children of Muslim minority of Ireland (Mr. Syed Arqam Ali Sabzwari)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the stakeholder to the petitioner and close the petition.

8.2 [[Petition No. P00037/16] – Company Secretary and Director (Ms. Evelyn Flynn)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Department to the petitioner and close the petition.

8.3 [Petition No. P00013/17] – Make the New English Junior Cert Exam fairer by adding Thirty Extra Minutes (Ms. Tara O'Sullivan)

It was agreed, to –

1. Invite representatives form the Irish National Organisation for Teachers of English to appear before the Committee to further examine their views on the petition;
2. Forward the petition to the Joint Committee on Education and Skills for its observations in relation to the petition, and on the need to have mock examinations;
3. Consult further with the Department of Education and Skills in relation to the use of the Mock examinations;
4. Invite the Houses of the Oireachtas, Parliamentary Education Officer to appear before the Committee in private session to discuss his views on the petition and mock examinations;

5. Forward a copy of the response from INOTE to the petitioner; and
6. It may be decided in the future to invite the State Examination Commission to appear once again before the Committee to clarify issues raised.

8.4 [Petition No. P00023/17] Open an ASD Unit in all Primary and Secondary Schools (Ms. Judith Dunphy and Mr Shane Clarke)

It was agreed, to:

1. Correspond with the Department once again, requesting an update on the outstanding correspondence;
2. Also to request details of statistics available from the Department on the distances that children with a recognised need for an ASD unit need to travel to avail of a school with an ASD unit;
3. Correspond with AsIAm advocacy organisation seeking its observations in relation to this petition;
4. Forward a copy of the responses from Irish Autism Action and the Irish Society for Autism to the petitioner and outline the further steps being taken by the Committee; and
5. Correspond with the National Council for Special Education.

8.5 [Petition No. P00030/17] Request for Amending Legislation relating to dog control (Ms. Arjita Chawla)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the County and City Management Association to the petitioner, and the petition will remain open as we are still awaiting a response from the petitioner.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 13:55 pm until Wednesday 08th of November 2017, at 1.30 p.m.

Seán Sherlock
Chairman
08 November, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 08 NOVEMBER 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:41 p.m. in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Shane Cassells, Martin Heydon, Denise Mitchell and Séan Sherlock (in the Chair)

Senators: Jerry Buttimer and Diarmuid Wilson

Also in attendance was Senator Paddy Burke.

Apologies were received from Deputies Dara Murphy, Eugene Murphy and Senators Colette Kelleher and Denis Landy.

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed, to go into private session at 13:42 pm to deal with housekeeping matters

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 14:06 p.m. until 14:08 p.m to allow the witness to take his seat.

6. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

8. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

9. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

In Public Session

The meeting continued in public session at 14:22 p.m. to record the decisions of the Committee.

10. Decisions on Public Petitions

10.1 [Petition No. P00020/16] – Negotiating Norms (Mr. Des Lafferty)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the response from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, including a copy of the Department's Customer Charter to the petitioner and close the petition.

10.2 [Petition No. P00024/16] – Criteria in order to qualify for a primary medical certificate (Mr. Thomas Mackey)

It was agreed, to:

1. Correspond with the Chief Medical Officer with responsibility for assessing applications for a Primary Medical Certificate in relation to the rigid eligibility criteria of the scheme; and

2. Invite the Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform to come before the Committee to discuss this issue and also the delay in the initiation of the proposed Health (Transport Support) Bill.

10.3 [Petition No. P00024/17] Regulatory action towards insurance claims and premiums (Mr. Christian Fuglsang)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the third quarter progress report to the petitioner and close the petition.

10.4 [Petition No. P00027/17*] End privatisation of Irelands water network* (Mr. Ciarán McMahon)

It was agreed to, forward on a copy of the Bill to the petitioner, advise him of the future publication of the Committee report and close the petition.

10.5 [Petition No. P00029/17] Legalisation of Cannabis for personal use (Mr. Eoin Ferris)

It was agreed, to forward a copy of the responses from the Department of Justice and Equality, the Department of Health, and a copy of the Report published by the Joint Committee on Health to the petitioner and close the petition.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 14:25 pm until Wednesday 22nd of November 2017, at 1.30 p.m., when we will meet with Ms. Tara O'Sullivan in relation to her petition, entitled "*Make the New English Junior Cert Exam fairer by adding Thirty Extra Minutes*".

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Seán Sherlock
Chairman
22 November, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:32 p.m. in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Shane Cassells, Denise Mitchell, Dara Murphy, Brendan Ryan and Séan Sherlock (in the Chair)

Senators: Jerry Buttimer and Colette Kelleher

Apologies were received from Deputy Eugene Murphy and Senators Denis Landy and Diarmuid Wilson.

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed, to go into private session at 13:33 pm to deal with housekeeping matters

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

6. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 13:41 p.m. until 13:43 p.m to allow the witnesses to take their seats.

In Public Session

The meeting continued in public session at 13:43 p.m. to record the decisions of the Committee.

7. DECISIONS ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

7.1 [Petition No. P00013/17] – Make the New English Junior Cert Exam fairer by adding Thirty Extra Minutes (Ms. Tara O'Sullivan)

It was agreed, to:

1. Forward a copy of the response from the Department of Education and Skills to the petitioner;
2. Seek submissions from the Irish Second-Level Students' Union (ISSU); the Teaching Council of Ireland in relation to its views on the duration of the English examination and on the importance of holding mock examinations; and
3. Invite the State Examination Commission to once again appear before the Committee in early 2018, to provide an update on any progress made in relation to engagement with Stakeholders and their feedback on the service it provides.

8. ENGAGEMENT WITH MS. TARA O'SULLIVAN, PETITIONER IN RELATION TO PUBLIC PETITION NO. P00013/17, ENTITLED "MAKE THE NEW ENGLISH JUNIOR CERT EXAM FAIRER BY ADDING THIRTY MINUTES EXTRA"

The Committee took oral evidence from Ms. Tara O'Sullivan, Ms. Adrianne Ward, Ms. Ellen McKimm and Ms. Faye Dolan, secondary school students, in relation to public petition No. P00013/17, entitled "Make the new English Junior Cert Exam fairer by adding thirty minutes extra".

Debate ensued and concluded.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 14:27 p.m. until Wednesday 06th of December 2017, at 1:30 p.m., when it will meet with Ms. Leigh Gath, Confidential Recipient and consider public petitions received.

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Colette Kelleher
Vice Chair
06 December, 2017

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 06 DECEMBER 2017

The Joint Committee met in **public session** at 13:38 p.m. in Committee Room 1, LH 2000, a quorum being present.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

The following members were present:

Deputies: Shane Cassells, Denise Mitchell and Eugene Murphy

Senators: Colette Kelleher (in the Chair)

Also in attendance was Senator Gerry Horkan in substitution for Diarmuid Wilson and Catherine Ardagh

Apologies were received from Deputies Dara Murphy and Seán Sherlock and Senators Jerry Buttimer and Diarmuid Wilson.

2. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed, to go into private session at 13:39 pm to deal with housekeeping matters

3. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

4. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

5. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 13:45 p.m. until 14:10 p.m due to a Dáil vote.

6. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee agreed, to go into private session at 14:10 pm

7. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

8. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 13:41 p.m. until 13:43 p.m to allow the witness to enter the room.

9. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

10. MEETING SUSPENDED

The meeting was suspended at 14:16 p.m. until 14:17 p.m. to allow the witness to exit the room.

11. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

12. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

13. ITEM DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE SESSION

In Public Session

The meeting continued in public session at 15:06 p.m. to record the decisions of the Committee.

14. DECISIONS ON PUBLIC PETITIONS

14.1 [Petition No. P00021/16] – Investigate circumstances relating to flawed implementation of fishing legislation (Mr. Michael Callanan)
It was agreed, to inform the petitioner that the Committee are satisfied with the eligibility criteria of both schemes and how they were administered. It was further agreed, to forward a copy of response from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to the petitioner and close the petition.

14.2 [Petition No. P00013/17] – Make the New English Junior Cert Exam fairer by adding Thirty Extra Minutes (Ms. Tara O'Sullivan)
It was agreed to:

1. Correspond with the Department of Education and Skills and the State Examination Commission, forwarding a copy of the transcript of the meeting with the petitioner, a copy of the presentation provided and request it addresses the issues raised during this meeting;
2. Invite Officials from the Department of Education and Skills to once again appear before the Committee with the State Examinations Board in early 2018, to provide an update on the issues outlined; and
3. Correspond with the petitioner, informing her of the further steps agreed by the Committee, in relation to the petition, and request her to provide a copy of the sample papers issued to her and a copy of the mock examination paper, if possible.

14.3 [Petition No. P00028/17] –Stop Bill restricting Freedom of Speech on the Internet/Social Media (Mr. Ciarán McMahon)
It was agreed to forward on a copy of the response from Minister Josepha Madigan to the petitioner and close the petition.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 15:12 p.m. until Wednesday 24th of January 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

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Seán Sherlock
Chairman
24 January 2017