



REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON STANDING ORDERS AND DÁIL REFORM

Orders of Reference and Establishment of Committees

Adopted by the Committee
29 April 2025

Establishment of Committees in the 34th Dáil

Background: One of the tasks falling to a new Dáil is the establishment of a committee system. Following a general election, the Dáil appoints Committees by approving the Orders of Reference of each Committee, including the remit of the Committee, the powers devolved upon it, the number of members to serve on it, the quorum of the Committee, and (if required) the date upon which the Committee shall report back to the Dáil.

Pursuant to Standing Order 128(2)(a), it is a function of the Committee on Standing Orders and Dáil Reform (CSODR) to consider and make recommendations on the establishment of Committees. In order for CSODR to progress the establishment of Committees, it is necessary for the make-up of the Dáil to be determined following Government formation and recognition of Opposition parties and technical groups.

CSODR consideration of the committee system for the 34th Dáil: At its meeting on Wednesday, 9 April 2025, CSODR considered and agreed the list of the Committees to be established in the 34th Dáil, on a proposal by the Government Chief Whip, Minister of State Mary Butler. At its meeting on Tuesday, 29 April 2025, CSODR agreed the Committee Orders of Reference as contained in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 in the paper included in this report.

Recommendation: Pursuant to Standing Order 102(1), CSODR hereby recommends that the Dáil appoint Committees with the Orders of Reference as contained in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 to this report.

Next steps: Where the Orders of Reference have been agreed by the House, the Committee of Selection may then nominate members to serve on Committees in accordance with Standing Order 33.¹ Once nominated, members shall be appointed to Committees on a motion in the House to adopt the Committee of Selection's report. As soon as the Select Committees have been appointed by the Dáil, their counterpart Seanad Select Committees may be appointed by the Seanad, in order to form Joint Committees.

Committee on Standing Orders and Dáil Reform

29 April 2025

¹ At a meeting of the Committee of Selection on Thursday, 10th April, 2025, the Government and Opposition parties and groups, in accordance with Standing Order 113, selected the chairs of individual Committees in accordance with the d'Hondt system.

Paper for Committee on Standing Orders and Dáil Reform

Committee system of the Thirty-Fourth Dáil

- Establishment Orders and Orders of Reference

29 April 2025

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Introduction

This report sets out the proposed Orders of Reference for 23 Committees to be established in the Thirty-Fourth Dáil, based on the list provided by the Government Chief Whip to the meeting of the Committee on Standing Orders and Dáil Reform on 9 April 2025.

This report does not include the following 5 Committees as they automatically stand established under Standing Orders and their Orders of Reference are set out in Standing Orders. The only step required to complete their establishment is to nominate membership through the Committee of Selection.

- Committee on Members' Interests of Dáil Éireann - see **SO 131**.
- Committee on Public Petitions and the Ombudsmen – see **SO 134**.
- Committee of Public Accounts – see **SO 226**.
- Committee on Budgetary Oversight – see **SO 229**.
- Joint Committee on the Irish Language, Gaeltacht and the Irish-speaking Community – see **SO 132**.

Departmental Select Committees

These Committee Orders of Reference and powers are set out in SOs 103 and 104. An establishment order is required to set these Committees up so as to map them on to the Ministerial and Departmental responsibilities in the current Dáil. The composite draft establishment motion for these Committees is set out in **Appendix 1**.

1. Agriculture and Food
2. Arts, Media, Communications, Culture and Sport
3. Children and Equality
4. Disability Matters
5. Climate, Environment and Energy
6. Defence and National Security
7. Education and Youth
8. Fisheries and Maritime Affairs
9. Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
10. Enterprise, Tourism and Employment
11. Finance, Public Expenditure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation, and Taoiseach
12. Foreign Affairs and Trade
13. Health
14. Housing, Local Government and Heritage
15. Justice, Home Affairs and Migration
16. Social Protection, Rural and Community Development
17. Transport

Thematic Committees

These Joint Committees are not contained in Standing Orders and must be set up in each Dáil. Establishment motions setting out their Orders of Reference are set out in **Appendix 2**.

1. Committee on European Union Affairs
2. Committee on Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement
3. Committee on Key Issues affecting the Traveller Community
4. Committee on Infrastructure and National Development Plan Delivery

Special Committees

These are time-limited Joint Committees. Orders of reference are set out in **Appendix 3**.

1. Committee on Drugs Use
 2. Committee on Artificial Intelligence
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Appendix 1: 17 Departmental Select Committees: composite motion with establishment orders

- (1) That Select Committees as set out in column (1) of the Schedule set out in this Order are hereby appointed pursuant to Standing Order 103.
- (2) Subject to paragraph (9) of this Order and in anticipation of the coming into effect of the necessary Government Orders in relation to names of Departments and titles of Ministers and transfer of Departmental Administration and Ministerial Functions, each Select Committee shall perform the functions set out in Standing Order 103 in respect of the Government Department or Departments listed in column (2) opposite each Committee.
- (3) The number of members appointed to each Select Committee shall be nine.
- (4) Each Select Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 104, other than paragraphs (6) to (10).
- (5) Each Select Committee shall be joined with a Select Committee appointed by Seanad Éireann to form a Joint Committee to carry out the functions set out in Standing Order 103.
- (6) Each Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Orders 104, 142 and 144.
- (7) The Select Committee on Justice, Home Affairs and Migration shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 143(1)(b).
- (8) It shall be an instruction to each Select Committee that the work programme provided for in Standing Order 109(4) and annual report provided for in Standing Order 109(6) shall include the consideration of such aspects of progress on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals set out in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as are within the scope of the Committee's Orders of Reference as set out in Standing Orders.[²]

² Replicates and revises Dáil motion re 'Work Programmes of Select Committees' ([July 2020](#)).

SCHEDULE

| | Committee | Departments |
|-----------|--|--|
| 1 | Agriculture and Food | Agriculture, Food, Fisheries, and the Marine |
| 2 | Arts, Media, Communications, Culture and Sport | Arts, Media, Communications, Culture and Sport |
| 3 | Children and Equality | Children, Disability and Equality |
| 4 | Disability Matters | Children, Disability and Equality |
| 5 | Climate, Environment and Energy | Climate, Environment and Energy |
| 6 | Defence and National Security ³ | Defence |
| 7 | Education and Youth | Education and Youth |
| 8 | Fisheries and Maritime Affairs | Agriculture, Food, Fisheries, and the Marine |
| 9 | Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science | Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science |
| 10 | Enterprise, Tourism and Employment | Enterprise, Tourism and Employment |
| 11 | Finance, Public Expenditure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation, and Taoiseach | Finance |
| | | Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation |
| | | Taoiseach |
| 12 | Foreign Affairs and Trade | Foreign Affairs and Trade |
| 13 | Health | Health |
| 14 | Housing, Local Government and Heritage | Housing, Local Government and Heritage |
| 15 | Justice, Home Affairs and Migration | Justice, Home Affairs and Migration |
| 16 | Social Protection, Rural and Community Development | Social Protection |
| | | Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht |
| 17 | Transport | Transport |

³ National Security encompasses cyber-defence, sub-sea critical infrastructure and related hybrid threats.

- (9) For the avoidance of any doubt, the Departmental remit of the Select Committees at rows 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 11 and 16 in the Schedule above is defined as follows:

all matters relating to the policy area in column (1) of the Table below as set out in Standing Order 103, including –

- (a) legislation, policy, governance, expenditure and administration, and
- (b) matters relating to State bodies and non-State bodies,

within the responsibility of the Department at column (2), are within the remit of the Select Committee at column (3) and shall not be within the remit of the Select Committee at column (4).

TABLE

Departments and policy areas which are split between Committees

| (1) Policy area | (2) Relevant Department | (3) Within the remit of (Committee) | (4) Not within the remit of (Committee) |
|---|--|--|--|
| Fisheries and the Marine | Agriculture, Food, Fisheries, and the Marine | Fisheries and Maritime Affairs | Agriculture and Food |
| Maritime Planning and Regulation | Climate, Environment and Energy | Fisheries and Maritime Affairs | Climate, Environment and Energy |
| Disability | Children, Disability and Equality | Disability Matters | Children and Equality |
| Gaeltacht | Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht | Irish Language, Gaeltacht and the Irish-speaking Community | Social Protection, Rural and Community Development |
| Infrastructure and National Development Plan Delivery | Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation | Infrastructure and National Development Plan Delivery | Finance, Public Expenditure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation, and Taoiseach |

- (10) The Joint Committee on Disability Matters shall monitor the implementation (by Ireland) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In this regard, the Committee shall consider and report on—

(a) the ‘Implementation Plan’ for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and national strategies including the National Disability Inclusion Strategy and sector strategies for the purpose of—

- i. ensuring implementation plans are configured to advance the UNCRPD while delivering outcomes for persons with disabilities in their lived experience and planning into the future,
- ii. making recommendations which align the plans and strategies of Ireland’s international obligations,
- iii. monitoring progress of the drafting and initiation of required and relevant legislation,
- iv. engaging with Ministers and the Secretaries General of relevant Government departments regarding implementation measures and budgetary measures,
- v. aligning the UN Sustainable Development Goals with the provisions of the UNCRPD,
- vi. supporting the embedding of a rights-based approach to disability as provided by the UNCRPD within Ireland’s economy, society, and culture; and
- vii. reviewing Ireland’s Report/s to the UNCRPD Committee.

(b) the effectiveness of –

- i. all national processes established to implement the UNCRPD; and
- ii. the National Framework for Monitoring the implementation of the Convention including engagement with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the National Disability Authority.

(11) For the purposes of paragraph (10) and its work programme more generally, the Joint Committee on Disability Matters shall engage with persons with disabilities, family carers, Disabled Persons’ Organisations, service providers and advocates.

Appendix 2: Thematic Committees: Orders of Reference

Committee on European Union Affairs

- (1) That a Select Committee, which shall be called the Select Committee on European Union Affairs, consisting of nine members of Dáil Éireann, be appointed to consider such matters arising from—
 - (a) Ireland’s membership of the European Union, and
 - (b) Ireland’s adherence to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, as it may select and which are not referred to any other Committee.
- (2) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Select Committee shall consider such—
 - (a) Bills the statute law in respect of which is dealt with by the Department of Foreign Affairs,
 - (b) proposals contained in any motion, including any motion within the meaning of Standing Order 228; and
 - (c) other matters, as shall be referred to it by the Dáil.
- (3) The Minister for Foreign Affairs (or a member of the Government or Minister of State nominated to act in his or her stead for that purpose) shall be an *ex officio* member of the Select Committee for the purpose of consideration of the matters outlined at paragraph (2)(a) and (b) and shall be entitled to vote in Select Committee proceedings.
- (4) The Select Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 104, other than paragraphs (6) to (10).
- (5) The Select Committee shall be joined with a Select Committee appointed by Seanad Éireann, to form the Joint Committee on European Union Affairs, which, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), shall consider—
 - (a) the EU Commission’s strategic planning documents including the Commission Work Programme,

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- (b) cross-sectoral policy developments at European Union level,
 - (c) matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of the General Affairs Council of Ministers and the outcome of such meetings,
 - (d) such regulations under the European Communities Acts 1972 to 2009 and other instruments made under statute and necessitated by the obligations of membership of the European Union as the Committee may select,
 - (e) notifications referred by the Dáil under Standing Order 143(1)(a),
 - (f) notifications of proposals for the amendment of the Treaties received from the European Council pursuant to Article 48.2 of the Treaty on European Union,
 - (g) notifications of applications for membership of the European Union received from the European Council pursuant to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, and
 - (h) such other matters as may be referred to it by the Dáil from time to time.
- (6) The Joint Committee shall report to both Houses of the Oireachtas on the operation of the European Union (Scrutiny) Act 2002.
- (7) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 104, 142 and 144 and shall have the power to make recommendations to the Minister for Foreign Affairs (or Minister of State) on European Union matters.
- (8) The following may attend meetings of the Joint Committee and take part in proceedings without having a right to vote or to move motions and amendments:
- (a) Members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies in Ireland, and
 - (b) at the invitation of the Committee, other Members of the European Parliament.
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- (9) The Joint Committee shall represent both Houses of the Oireachtas at the Conference of Community and European Affairs Committees of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC) and shall report to both Houses of the Oireachtas thereon.
- (10) The Cathaoirleach of the Dáil Select Committee shall also be the Cathaoirleach of the Joint Committee.

Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement

- (1) That a Select Committee consisting of nine members of Dáil Éireann be appointed to be joined with a Select Committee to be appointed by Seanad Éireann to form the Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement to consider—
 - (a) issues arising from Ireland's role as a signatory to the Good Friday Agreement,
 - (b) ongoing developments in the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement;
and
 - (c) any proposals relating to the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement and such related matters as shall be referred to it by the Dáil and/or the Seanad from time to time, and to report back to both Houses of the Oireachtas at least once a year.
 - (2) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 104, other than paragraphs (3) to (9) inclusive thereof.
 - (3) The Minister for Foreign Affairs (or a member of the Government or Minister of State nominated in his or her stead) shall be an *ex officio* member of the Committee and shall be entitled to vote in proceedings.
 - (4) Members of the Westminster Parliament elected from constituencies in Northern Ireland may attend meetings of the Joint Committee and of its sub-Committees and may take part in proceedings without having a right to vote or to move motions and amendments.
 - (5) The Cathaoirleach of the Dáil Select Committee shall also be the Cathaoirleach of the Joint Committee.
 - (6) (a) The Committee may agree to provide copies of Committee documents to the members of the Westminster Parliament referred to at paragraph (4).

(b) Where the Committee agrees to provide such copies, the Committee may further agree that, subject to any prior direction that the Committee may give from time to time in respect of any document or class of documents, the Cathaoirleach of the Committee shall, by circulating a list of the documents concerned, give notice to members of the Committee of the documents of which, and the time at, and date on which, those copies are to be provided: Provided that any member of the Committee may by communication to the Cathaoirleach, raise an objection to that provision, whether in respect of any specified document or
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documents, or of all documents listed, and where any such objection is raised, a decision in relation to provision of copies of the document or documents the subject of the objection will be made at the next meeting of the Committee.

- (c) The Committee may specify the minimum notice a member of the Committee must give of an objection referred to in subparagraph (b), and the Cathaoirleach is not bound to have regard to an objection later communicated.

Committee on Key Issues Affecting the Traveller Community⁴

- (1) That a Select Committee consisting of nine members of Dáil Éireann be appointed to be joined with a Select Committee to be appointed by Seanad Éireann to form the Joint Committee on Key Issues Affecting the Traveller Community.
- (2) Building on the work of previous Committees in aiming for consensus based on human rights principles, the Joint Committee shall propose policy directions and review the implementation of policy in respect of all key issues affecting the Traveller Community, including but not limited to—
 - (a) school completion rates and educational attainment, particularly at second and third level compared to the settled population;
 - (b) labour market participation and progress in relation to employment opportunities for Travellers;
 - (c) matters related to physical health, mental health and suicide levels among Travellers;
 - (d) access to housing and accommodation, including Traveller-specific accommodation; and
 - (e) Travellers' experience of the justice system,and may report thereon to both Houses of the Oireachtas.
- (3) In carrying out its role under paragraph (2), the Joint Committee may—
 - (a) review the work carried out by previous Joint Committees on Key Issues affecting the Traveller Community and shall be provided with access to all submissions and relevant documentation of the respective Committees;
 - (b) examine current statutory, non-statutory and Departmental responses, including policy, resources and law;
 - (c) research and identify models of good practice nationally and internationally;
 - (d) establish parameters to gather relevant data; and
 - (e) make recommendations, taking into account the views of the Traveller Community; and

⁴ Draft OoR set out in CSODR report ([17 September 2020](#)) approved by order of Dáil Éireann on [22 September 2020](#). Committee was, at that stage, a (timebound) Special Committee. It was proposed by a report of the CSODR on [26 April 2023](#) that a new committee (known as the '2023' Traveller's committee) be appointed

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- (f) review the implementation of the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy.
 - (4) Members of either House, not being members of the Joint Committee, may attend and take part in proceedings of the Joint Committee, or any sub-Committee thereof, but without having a right to vote or to move motions or amendments, save where they attend, pursuant to Standing Orders, as a substitute for an absent member (or for a substitute not in attendance).
 - (5) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 104, other than paragraph (6).

Committee on Infrastructure and National Development Plan Delivery

- (1) That a Select Committee consisting of nine members of Dáil Éireann be appointed to be joined with a Select Committee to be appointed by Seanad Éireann to form the Joint Committee on Infrastructure and National Development Plan Delivery to consider the following matters—
- (a) sectoral infrastructure programmes and projects, and their delivery, including but not limited to the following areas (in anticipation of the coming into effect of the necessary Government Orders):
 - i. Agriculture, Food, Fisheries, and the Marine,
 - ii. Arts, Media, Communications, Culture and Sport,
 - iii. Children, Disability and Equality,
 - iv. Climate, Environment and Energy,
 - v. Education and Youth,
 - vi. Enterprise, Tourism and Employment,
 - vii. Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science,
 - viii. Health,
 - ix. Housing, Local Government and Heritage,
 - x. Justice, Home Affairs and Migration,
 - xi. Office of Public Works,
 - xii. Transport;
 - (b) cross cutting Government policies that guide infrastructure development, including Project Ireland 2040 and The National Development Plan;
 - (c) the National Planning Framework;
 - (d) policy in relation to infrastructure development generally; and
 - (e) broader EU and International policies that impact on infrastructure development, including:
 - i. environmental directives and regulations,
 - ii. procurement directives and regulations, and
 - iii. investment directives and regulations.
- (2) Members of either House, not being members of the Joint Committee, may attend and take part in proceedings of the Joint Committee, or any sub-Committee thereof, but without having a right to vote or to move motions or amendments, save where they attend, pursuant to Standing Orders, as a substitute for an absent member (or for a substitute not in attendance).
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- (3) The Select Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 104, other than paragraphs (6) to (10) and may consider Bills which relate to the development of infrastructure referred to it by Dáil Éireann, provided that the Select Committee may not consider Estimates for Public Services within the meaning of Standing Order 103(5).
- (4) The Select Committee shall be joined with a Select Committee appointed by Seanad Éireann to form a Joint Committee to carry out the functions set out in Standing Order 103.
- (5) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 104, subject to the provisos as set out in that Standing Order, including the power to require the attendance of—
- (a) the member of the Government or Minister of State, as set out at paragraph (1)(a), to attend before the Committee to discuss policy or legislation for which he or she is officially responsible, and
 - (b) of principal office holders of a State body within the responsibility of a Government Department, or of a non-State body which is partly funded by the State, to attend meetings of the Select Committee, as appropriate, to discuss issues for which they are officially responsible.

Appendix 3: Special Committees: Orders of Reference

Special Committee on Drugs Use

- (1) That a Special Committee consisting of nine members of Dáil Éireann be appointed, to be joined with a Special Committee to be appointed by Seanad Éireann, to form the Joint Committee on Drugs Use ('the Joint Committee').
 - (2) The Joint Committee shall consider the Report of the Citizens' Assembly on Drugs Use ('the Report') and shall provide a response to the subject matter of the Report, including a reasoned response to each of the 36 recommendations contained in the Report.
 - (3) In carrying out its role under paragraph (2), the Joint Committee may review the work carried out by previous Joint Committee on Drugs Use and have regard to its Interim Report laid before both Houses on 22 October 2024 and the recommendations therein, and shall be provided with access to all submissions and relevant documentation of the Committee.
 - (4) The Joint Committee shall report to both Houses of the Oireachtas on the matter before it within 9 months of the first public meeting of the Joint Committee.
 - (5) The quorum of the Joint Committee shall be four, at least one of whom shall be a member of Dáil Éireann, and one a member of Seanad Éireann.
 - (6) Members of either House, not being members of the Joint Committee, may attend and take part in proceedings of the Joint Committee, or any sub-Committee thereof, but without having a right to vote or to move motions or amendments, save where they attend, pursuant to Standing Orders, as a substitute for an absent member (or for a substitute not in attendance).
 - (7) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (9) and (10) of Standing Order 104.
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Committee on Artificial Intelligence

- (1) That a Special Committee consisting of nine members of Dáil Éireann be appointed to be joined with a Special Committee to be appointed by Seanad Éireann to form the Joint Committee on Artificial Intelligence to examine and make recommendations on Ireland's approach to the development, deployment, regulation, and ethical considerations of artificial intelligence (AI), and on the means of ensuring that the approach supports economic growth, innovation, public trust, and societal benefit while safeguarding rights and mitigating risks.

- (2) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1) the Committee shall—
 - (a) examine the implications of existing and proposed AI regulations, including alignment with EU frameworks (e.g., the EU AI Act);
 - (b) recommend any necessary legislative or policy measures to ensure Ireland remains a leader in ethical and innovative AI development;
 - (c) explore AI's potential to drive economic growth, job creation, and innovation across sectors;
 - (d) engage with industry stakeholders to ensure Ireland remains an attractive hub for AI investment and talent;
 - (e) evaluate the ethical implications of AI applications, including bias, transparency, accountability, and human oversight;
 - (f) examine and propose mechanisms to address issues such as algorithmic discrimination and misuse of AI technologies;
 - (g) develop guidelines for the transparent and responsible use of AI across the public service / government agencies;
 - (h) assess Ireland's preparedness to meet the demand for AI-related skills and training;
 - (i) recommend policies to embed AI literacy in educational curricula and workforce development programs;
 - (j) investigate potential risks associated with AI, including cybersecurity threats, misinformation, and unemployment due to automation;
 - (k) monitor global developments in AI and ensure Ireland's approach aligns with international best practices;
 - (l) recommend measures to support Ireland's role in shaping global AI governance frameworks; and

(m) examine and evaluate the environmental impact of AI technologies.

(3) The Joint Committee shall have the power to –

- (a) invite and receive oral and written submissions from stakeholders, including academics, industry leaders, civil society, and the general public;
- (b) if required, commission research and expert reports on relevant AI topics;
- (c) review Ireland’s readiness and capacity to implement AI legislation and initiatives.

(4) The Joint Committee shall provide regular interim reports and a final report to both Houses of the Oireachtas on the matter before it within 24 months of the first public meeting of the Joint Committee.

(5) The quorum of the Joint Committee shall be four, at least one of whom shall be a member of Dáil Éireann, and one a member of Seanad Éireann.

(6) Members of either House, not being members of the Joint Committee, may attend and take part in proceedings of the Joint Committee, or any sub-Committee thereof, but without having a right to vote or to move motions or amendments, save where they attend, pursuant to Standing Orders, as a substitute for an absent member (or for a substitute not in attendance).

(7) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (9) and (10) of Standing Order 104.
