

Draft Ballot Paper

**The Manner in which referenda are held**

**For discussion by Members of the Assembly in advance of the voting to take place on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

**Introduction**

On Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January, the Members of the Assembly have considered a range of issues in relation to *The Manner in which Referenda are held*.

This draft Ballot Paper attempts to capture some of the key issues which have emerged during discussions.

The core business on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2018 will be discussions on the draft Ballot Paper. The Chairperson will introduce the complete draft Ballot Paper and the members will then have an opportunity to discuss it in their groups.

The members of the Expert Advisory Group, together with the Chair and the Secretariat, will then be available to answer any questions on the draft. Time has been included on the agenda to allow any amendment agreed by the members to be included on the final Ballot Paper.

The results of the final Ballot will form the basis of the recommendations to be made to the Houses of the Oireachtas.

The draft Ballot paper is broken down into three sections as follows:

- A. Organisation of Referendum Campaigns
- B. Voting in a Referendum
- C. Citizens Initiatives

Under each section a number of draft questions are provided.

Please note that in order to ensure that the timings for voting on the Sunday are adhered to, it will be necessary to strictly follow the agenda. This may mean that not every point of view will be heard in the feedback and questions and answers session.

## A. Organisation of Referendum Campaigns

### Question 1- Referendum Commission

Please Mark X in one box below.

	Mark X in one box	
<b>Question 1</b>	Yes	No
Do you think the functions of the Referendum Commission should be carried out by a permanent Electoral Commission?		

### Question 2- Referendum Commission

Please Mark X in one box below.

	Mark X in one box	
<b>Question 2</b>	Yes	No
Do you think the Referendum Commission should be obliged to give its view on significant matters of factual or legal dispute that arise during a referendum campaign in the public domain (including on social media)?		

### Question 3- Spending in referendum campaigns

Please Mark X in one box below.

	Mark X in one box	
<b>Question 3</b>	Yes	No
Do you agree with the current position where the Government is not permitted to spend public money to advocate on one side only of a referendum campaign?		

### Question 4- Spending in referendum campaigns

Please Mark X in one box below.

	Mark X in one box	
<b>Question 4</b>	Yes	No
Do you think the Government should provide money to both sides equally in referendum campaigns?		

**Question 5- Spending in referendum campaigns**

	<b>Mark X in one box</b>	
<b>Question 5</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Do you think the Oireachtas should give consideration to a system of spending limits in referendum campaigns for registered political parties and campaign groups?		

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## B. Voting in a Referendum

**Question 6- Super-referendums**  
Please Mark X in one box below.

	Mark X in one box	
<b>Question 6</b>	Yes	No
Do you think that it is a good idea to have more than one referendum, on unrelated issues, at the same time?		

**Question 7- Super-referendums**  
Please Mark X in one box below.

In the event that there is more than one referendum, on unrelated issues, at the same time, what do you think should be the maximum number of referendums?	
<b>Question 8</b>	<b>Mark X in one box</b>
There should be no more than two referendums at the same time	
There should be no more than three referendums at the same time	
There should be no upper limit on the number of referendums held at the same time	

**Question 8- Multi-option voting**  
Please Mark X in one box below.

	Mark X in one box	
<b>Question 8</b>	Yes	No
Do you think that it is a good idea to use multi-option voting in referendums?		

**Question 9- Implementation of Referendum outcome**

Please Mark X in one box below.

	Mark X in one box	
<b>Question 9</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Do you agree that, in principle, the Oireachtas and the Government should give effect to the outcome of a referendum within 5 years?		

**Question 10- Enhancing voter turnout in Referendums**

Please vote in respect of each of the initiatives by marking X in one box for initiative a) to f)

<b>Question 10</b>		
Which, if any, of these initiatives do you think should be introduced to try to increase voter turnout:	<b>Please indicate in relation to each initiative if you think it should be introduced by marking X</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
a) Early voting in the weeks before the poll		
b) Extended voting over a number of days		
c) Weekend voting		
d) Online voting		
e) Wider availability of postal voting		
f) The ability to vote at any polling station in the State		
g) Automatic inclusion of all eligible voters on the electoral register		
h) Compulsory voting		

## C. Citizens' Initiatives

### Question 11

Question 11		
Which, if any, of the following types of citizens' initiatives do you consider should be provided for?	Please indicate in relation to each initiative if you think it should be introduced by marking X	
	Yes	No
a) A citizens' initiative to put a constitutional referendum proposal to the people		
b) A citizens' initiative to put a legislative change proposal to the people (including enacting, changing or repealing legislation)		
c) A citizens' initiative to put an item on the agenda for decision by the Oireachtas		