



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

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**ASSEMBLY AND EXECUTIVE  
REVIEW COMMITTEE**

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**OFFICIAL REPORT  
(Hansard)**

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**Review of the Initial Ministerial  
Provision in relation to the  
Department of Justice and the  
arrangements from 1 May 2012**

22 November 2011

# NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

*This report was agreed sight unseen by the Committee.*

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## ASSEMBLY AND EXECUTIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

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Review of the Initial Ministerial Provision in relation to the  
Department of Justice and the arrangements from 1 May 2012

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22 November 2011

**Members present for all or part of the proceedings:**

Mr Stephen Moutray (Chairperson)  
Mr Pat Sheehan (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Roy Beggs  
Mr Gregory Campbell  
Mr Pat Doherty  
Mr Paul Givan  
Mr Simon Hamilton  
Mr Raymond McCartney  
Mr Conall McDevitt  
Mrs Sandra Overend

**The Chairperson:**

We now come to the review of the initial ministerial provision in relation to the Department of Justice and the arrangements from 1 May 2012. I remind members that the Department of Justice dissolves on 1 May 2012, unless, before that date, either the Assembly resolves, with cross-community support, that the Department is to continue operating from 1 May 2012, or a second Act of the Assembly provides that the Department is to continue operating from 1 May 2012.

I remind members that the Assembly referred this matter to the Assembly and Executive Review Committee. I also remind members that for a Bill to receive Royal Assent by 1 May

2012, the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister has indicated that it wishes to introduce the Bill and have its Second Stage debate before Christmas. That requires the Committee to conclude its review and submit its report to the Assembly for debate on 29 November 2011.

I advise members that the purpose of today's meeting is twofold. First, the Committee will be asked to agree the wording of its motion for the debate on the Committee's report in the Assembly plenary sitting on 29 November. Secondly, the Committee will be asked to approve its report so that it can be printed. If members are content with this approach, I will ask the Committee Clerk to speak briefly on the background and current position.

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Committee Clerk:**

At the Committee meeting on 15 November, the members who were present discussed the draft motion and favoured the wording "That this Assembly notes" rather than "That this Assembly approves". Members agreed that reference to "recommendations" should be removed from the title of the report and from the motion to be debated by the Assembly, hopefully on Tuesday 29 November.

Members will recall that the Committee agreed a proposal at its meeting on 15 November that the Committee draft a report that outlines all the different opinions, summarises the consultation outcome, who endorsed which option and why, and any other comments. The draft report has been written on that basis. It is a factual account of the Committee's work, drawing on the stakeholders' option paper, which was approved in full by the Committee, and it also draws extensively on stakeholder responses and specific Committee discussions as it agreed its final position. As such, the final Committee discussion section is based on quotations from the Hansard report of that meeting.

The full text of the draft report is in members' papers, but to reduce photocopying costs and related work, the appendices are not reproduced. The Chair will refer to those appendices in a moment.

**The Chairperson:**

I advise members that the Business Committee has agreed that 29 November will be the date

for a one-and-a-half-hour debate on the motion. I seek agreement for the wording of the motion, which is in members' papers.

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

I refer members to the draft report, which is also in members' packs. We will go through it. Are members content with page (i), which deals with powers and membership? That is standard text that is lifted from the Assembly website.

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

Are members content with page (ii), which shows the table of contents and, therefore, the proposed structure and content of the report and its appendices?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

As the Committee Clerk indicated, for efficiency purposes and given that the Committee previously approved all the documents, a full copy of the appendices has not been included in today's meeting pack. However, one copy is in the room should any member wish to view it. Are members content with pages 1 and 2, which cover the executive summary?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

Are members content with pages 3 and 4, which cover the introduction?

**Mr McCartney:**

I refer to paragraph 14. From my recollection, there were two reports into the arrangements on policing. Can we date the one that is referred to?

**The Chairperson:**

OK. Are members content?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

Are members content with pages 5 and 6, which deal with the Committee's approach?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

Are members content with paragraphs 22 to 28? Those paragraphs introduce the section on the Committee's consideration and quote extensively from the stakeholder submissions, which comment on the initial ministerial provision.

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

Are members content with paragraphs 29 to 50, which quote from the various stakeholder submissions on the arrangements from 1 May 2012 for ministerial provision for the Department of Justice? Those start with option A, continue with option B, followed by option C, and end with options D and E.

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

Are members content with paragraphs 51 to 55, which deal with the review or reduction in the number of government Departments in Northern Ireland?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

Are members content with paragraphs 56 to 59, which deal with the Committee discussions?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

I seek members' agreement that I, as Chairperson, will approve an extract of the minutes of today's proceedings for inclusion in the report. I also seek members' agreement that the first edition of the Hansard report of today's session will be included in the report of the review, as there is insufficient time for members to review the transcript and provide comments. Are members content?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

I seek members' agreement that the Assembly and Executive Review Committee should order its report on the review of initial ministerial provision in relation to the Department of Justice and the arrangements from 1 May 2012 to be printed.

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

I seek members' agreement that in the interests of efficiency, printed copies be kept to a minimum.

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

I seek members' agreement for a manuscript copy of the report to be laid in the Business Office later today.

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Chairperson:**

I advise the Committee that the report should be returned by the printer and distributed to members on Thursday 24 November 2011. The report will be embargoed until the commencement of the debate, which will hopefully be confirmed today by the Business Committee for the plenary sitting on Tuesday 29 November 2011.

I seek agreement that I, as Chairperson, propose the motion and that the Deputy

Chairperson makes the winding-up speech, and I seek agreement that, as is convention, I write, as Chairperson, to all relevant stakeholders to thank them for their submissions to the review.

*Members indicated assent.*