

To: All parties and independent Members.

From: The Chairperson of the Committee on Procedures.

Date: 16 March 2020

## **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

On 19 February 2020, the Speaker wrote to the Committee on Procedures setting out his desire to have a short period in Plenary during which Members have the opportunity to put issues briefly on the record without requiring him to judge against any particular criteria.

While the Speaker believes that the introduction of such arrangements would give the Assembly and Members greater flexibility to emerging issues, he also recognised that there are many practical issues which first need to be considered. Therefore, the Speaker asked the Committee if it would consider the merits of introducing arrangements here at the Assembly.

On the 26 February 2020, the Committee undertook its strategic planning of work-streams and agreed for Members' Statements to be an immediate priority in its work programme.

At its meeting on 11 March 2020, the Committee agreed to write to all parties and independent Members to seek their views on the arrangement for Members' Statements should it decide to bring forward necessary amendments to Standing Orders.

The Committee is keen to receive views on the following:

- **How frequently Members should have the opportunity to make statements;**
- **How long any period for statements should last;**
- **At what point during a sitting Members' statements should be scheduled, as well as whether it should be at a set time for each sitting or flexible;**
- **The process by which Members are chosen to make a statement;**
- **What time limit there should be on each individual statement; and**
- **Whether there should be any formal restrictions on what Members might say in their statements.**

Therefore, I would be grateful if you could provide your views by 20 April 2020. Please send your response to [committee.procedures@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:committee.procedures@niassembly.gov.uk)

Submissions will be published by the Committee unless otherwise indicated.

Any queries should be directed to the Clerk, Nick Mitford, at [nick.mitford@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:nick.mitford@niassembly.gov.uk) or by telephone on 21205.