



Northern Ireland Assembly

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON A BILL OF RIGHTS

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday 22 October 2020
Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present, Room 29:	Emma Sheerin MLA (Chairperson) Mike Nesbitt MLA (Deputy Chairperson) Michelle McIlveen MLA Christopher Stalford MLA
Present, via StarLeaf:	Paula Bradshaw MLA Mark Durkan MLA John O'Dowd MLA (deputising for Carál Ní Chuilín MLA)
In Attendance:	Caroline Perry (Assembly Clerk) Gareth Cross (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced in open session at 2.03 p.m.

1. Apologies

None.

2. Briefing by the Equality Coalition on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland

Daniel Holder, Deputy Director of the Committee on the Administration of Justice and Co-Convener of the Equality Coalition, joined the meeting via StarLeaf at 2.05 p.m.
Patricia McKeown, Regional Secretary of UNISON and Co-Convener of the Equality Coalition, joined the meeting via StarLeaf at 2.11pm.

Their briefing explained the Coalition's view that a Bill of Rights could have acted as a safeguard to counter and prevent abuses of power, discriminatory decision-making and rights deficits. The briefing also considered citizenship rights, minority language rights, housing and social protection policy and a Bill of Rights. It explored the potential implications of a bill of rights for the stability of the power-sharing institutions.

The oral evidence was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked Daniel and Patricia for their evidence and apologised for the technical difficulties Patricia had experienced.

The briefing session was reported by Hansard.

3. Chairperson's Business

There was no Chairperson's business.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Ad Hoc Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 15 October 2020.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Correspondence

Members noted correspondence from the Clerk to the Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

7. Forward Work Programme

The Chairperson referred Members to the draft Forward Work Programme.

Members noted the Forward Work Programme.

8. Any other business

There was no other business.

9. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting will be on Thursday 5 November 2020 at 2.00p.m. in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 2.56 p.m.

Ms Emma Sheerin MLA
Chairperson, Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights