



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights

## Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday 15 April 2021

**Meeting Location:** Virtual Meeting, StarLeaf

**Present:** Emma Sheerin MLA (Chairperson)  
Paula Bradshaw MLA  
Mark Durkan MLA  
Michelle McIlveen MLA  
Carál Ní Chuilín MLA

**Apologies:** Mike Nesbitt MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

**In Attendance:** Caroline Perry (Assembly Clerk)  
Bronagh Irwin (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Gareth Cross (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 2:04pm in open session.

### 1. Apologies

As above.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

*Members agreed to move to agenda item 8.*

**2. Written Briefing by Professor Louise Mallinder: Human Rights Law Standards on Victims' Rights**

Members noted a written submission from Professor Louise Mallinder, Queen's University Belfast.

*Members agreed to move to agenda item 9.*

**3. Briefing by Conradh na Gaeilge: Language Rights**

Mr Conchúr Ó Muadaigh, Advocacy Manager, Conradh na Gaeilge and Mr Pádraig Ó Tiarnaigh, Communications Manager, Conradh na Gaeilge, joined the meeting via StarLeaf at 2:05pm.

Their briefing provided background to the work of Conradh na Gaeilge, highlighting their work on language rights in the context of the development and implementation of a bill of rights.

There were discussions around adherence to international agreements and the domestic enforceability of minority language rights.

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

*Michelle McIlveen joined the meeting at 2.32 pm*

The Chairperson thanked Mr Conchúr Ó Muadaigh and Mr Pádraig Ó Tiarnaigh for their evidence.

The briefing session was reported by Hansard.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

#### **4. Chairperson's Business**

There was no Chairperson's business.

#### **5. Draft Minutes**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 25 March 2021.

#### **6. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### **7. Correspondence**

Members noted correspondence from Dame Vera Baird QC in relation to apologies for being unable to brief the Committee at today's meeting; the Presbyterian Church in Ireland offering to brief the Committee; and The Executive Office in relation to the panel of experts.

#### **8. Forward Work Programme**

The Chairperson referred Members to the draft Forward Work Programme.

**Agreed:** Members agreed to schedule the informal meeting with the Houses of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement for 11:00am on Friday 30 April 2021.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**Agreed:** Members agreed to schedule the meeting with the Supreme Court of Ireland for 4:15pm on Thursday 6 May 2021

**Agreed:** Members agreed the Forward Work Programme.

### **9. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

### **10. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting**

The Committee will meet informally on Thursday 22 April 2021 for a virtual meeting with the UK Supreme Court.

The next formal meeting will be on Thursday 29 April 2021 at 2:00pm when the Committee will receive briefings from the Assembly's Research and Information Service, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Northern Ireland Equality Commission and the Children's Law Centre.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:52pm.

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