



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Assembly and Executive Review Committee

## Minutes of Proceedings

29 June 2021

**Meeting Location:** Room 30, Parliament Buildings

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Robbie Butler MLA

Alex Easton MLA

**Present:**

Pam Cameron MLA (Chairperson)

Jim Allister MLA

Gerry Kelly MLA

**Apologies:**

Jonathan Buckley MLA

Kellie Armstrong MLA

Colin McGrath MLA

Maoliosa McHugh MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

**In Attendance:** Mr Shane McAteer (Assembly Clerk)



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Ms Marie Austin (Senior Assistant Clerk)

Ms Sohui Yim (Assistant Clerk)

**In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:**

Mr Jim Nulty (Clerical Supervisor)

The meeting commenced at 1.30pm in open session.

**1. Apologies**

As noted above.

**2. Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared by Members.

**3. Draft Minutes**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2021.

**4. Matters Arising**

Members were advised that any matters arising would be covered elsewhere on the agenda.



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## 5. Report on the Review of Opposition Entitlements

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that the briefing from Mr Trevor Reaney on his independent report on the Review of the Statement of Entitlements for an Official Opposition would be recorded by Hansard, as it will form part of the evidence base for the Committee's report to the Assembly.

The Committee noted that Kellie Armstrong MLA had requested that the Alliance Party be provided with an opportunity to submit written comment on Mr Reaney's report.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to send Mr Reaney's report to all of the political parties and Independent Members represented in the Assembly to seek written comments by the deadline of 24 September 2021.

Members received a briefing from Mr Reaney on his independent report on the Review of the Statement of Entitlements for an Official Opposition.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward Mr Reaney's report to both the Assembly Commission and Committee on Procedures seeking written responses on the financial and procedural implications of the review recommendations as applicable.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request that the responses from the Assembly Commission and Committee on Procedures be provided by 24 September 2021 to enable it to prepare and make its report to the Assembly in October 2021 in accordance with the review timetable.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to offer both the Assembly Commission and the Committee on Procedures the option of an oral briefing from Mr Reaney on his report, in order to facilitate and expedite their responses.

**Noted:** The Committee noted that, if the offers for oral briefings from Mr Reaney are accepted by the Assembly Commission and the Committee on Procedures, it would be subject to making the appropriate further contracting arrangements with Mr Reaney.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to proceed with the further contracting arrangements as necessary.



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**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it will work to its timetable of reporting to the Assembly on the outcome of the review in October 2021 and that the necessary meetings will be scheduled accordingly.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to publish Mr Reaney's report on the Committee webpages, with the necessary redactions being made to personal data.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content that Mr Reaney had delivered upon the existing contractual requirements as set out in the Committee's specification for the review.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that the Chairperson will write both to Mr Reaney to thank him for his report and work to date and to Sir David Natzler, former Clerk to the House of Commons, to thank him for the assistance which he provided to Mr Reaney.

Jim Allister left the meeting at 2.11pm.

The meeting lost quorum.

### 6. Additional Review Topics: Follow Up Actions

Members received an update from the Committee Secretariat on the work that had been carried out to date to progress the additional strategic priorities agreed by the Committee. Additional actions were also proposed for consideration.

Members were advised that Committee agreement on the proposed additional actions would be sought via correspondence under the provisions of temporary Standing Order 115(9), whereby it is possible for a Standing Committee to make decisions without holding a Committee meeting.

### 7. Correspondence

Members considered the following correspondence:



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- Committee on Standards and Privileges on new complaints investigation procedures.
- Clerking and Member Support (CAMS) Office on social media training.
- Assembly Research paper on Gender Budgeting and Gender Inequalities in Northern Irish Education Policy.

### **8. Chairperson's Business**

The Chairperson informed members of the normal practice for handling Committee input to responses to non-routine/contentious Freedom of Information requests received during periods of recess. Members were advised that Committee agreement on continuing the practice would also be sought via correspondence under the provisions of temporary Standing Order 115(9).

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

There was no other business.

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

The next meeting of the Committee will take place after the summer recess, on a date notified in due course.

The meeting was adjourned at 2.21pm.

**Pam Cameron MLA**  
**Chairperson**  
**Assembly and Executive Review Committee**