

**NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY**  
**BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 20 JANUARY 2020**  
**IN ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

**MINUTES**

*The meeting began at 9.32am.*

**Present:**

**The Speaker (Chairperson)**  
**Ms K Armstrong**  
**Ms C Bailey**  
**Mr R Butler**  
**Mr C McGrath**  
**Mr A Muir**

**In attendance:**

<b>Dr A McGarel</b>	<b>Clerk of Business</b>
<b>Mr P Gill</b>	<b>Clerk Assistant</b>
<b>Mrs L Hogg</b>	<b>Clerk/Chief Executive</b>
<b>Dr G McGrath</b>	<b>Director of Parliamentary Services</b>
<b>Ms T Caul</b>	<b>Director of Legal, Governance and Research Services</b>
<b>Mr J McMillen</b>	<b>Head of Legal Services</b>
<b>Mr R Ramsey</b>	<b>Adviser to the Speaker</b>
<b>Mrs K O'Hanlon</b>	<b>Assistant Assembly Clerk</b>
<b>Ms P Devlin</b>	<b>Assistant Assembly Clerk</b>
<b>Mr M O'Hare</b>	<b>Clerical Supervisor</b>

**Observers:**

**Principal Deputy Speaker Stalford**

**1. Apologies**

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Mrs Dolores Kelly and Mr John Stewart. Mr Keith Buchanan attended as DUP substitute and Ms Sinead Ennis and Mr John O'Dowd attended as Sinn Féin substitutes.

**2. Membership of Statutory Committees**

- 2.1 Members were advised that a meeting had taken place with Chief Whips at which they were informed of committee numbers and allocation. Following

that meeting parties had identified their statutory committee membership. The Speaker reminded Members of his duty to ensure that all non-Ministerial Members are offered a place on statutory committees and sought confirmation that those Members of the DUP and Sinn Féin who do not have a place were content that they had been offered. Mr Buchanan and Mr O'Dowd confirmed that their respective parties were content with their committee representation.

- 2.3 Members **agreed** the list of statutory committee membership as detailed in NIA 5/17-22 under Standing Order 49(3).
- 2.4 Members were reminded that at the last meeting, they had agreed to include a motion on the Order Paper for 20 January to suspend the Standing Orders that require statutory committees to have 11 Members. At that time, Members had agreed to defer a decision to move the motion until after committee membership had been agreed. Members **agreed** that they were now content to move this motion.
- 2.5 Members **agreed** to write to the Committee on Procedures asking it to consider amending the Standing Orders which determine committee membership numbers.

### 3. **Membership of Standing Committees**

- 3.1 Members **agreed** the list of standing committee membership as detailed in NIA 6/17-22 under Standing Order 52(3).
- 3.2 Members **noted** that the lists would be placed in pigeonholes and made available in the Rotunda.

### 4. **Revised Order Paper**

- 4.2 The Speaker offered his thanks to Members for agreeing by email on Friday 17 January a Revised Order Paper for the sitting on 20 January noting that this ensured that Members had reasonable notice of the additional business requested by the Executive Office. The Speaker noted that when business is brought forward at a late stage and outside of normal procedure, it creates issues such as the inability for Members to table amendments to the motion.
- 4.3 The Speaker advised Members of his intention to write to the First Minister and deputy First Minister acknowledging the exceptional circumstances but emphasising that Ministers should ensure business is brought forward in a way which allows reasonable time for the Assembly to conduct its role.
- 4.4 Members were advised that two hours had been provisionally allowed for the Executive motion but given the short notice, it was reasonable to be flexible

on those timings. Members **agreed** that the timing for the motion should be increased to three hours.

5     **Any other business**

- 5.1   Members **agreed** that the deadline for Members to submit motions should be extended until 1:00pm today in advance of the afternoon's Business Committee meeting, and that a note should issue to Members and party staff.

6.     **Date and time of next meeting**

- 6.1   Members **agreed** to meet when the sitting adjourned today in Room 106.

*The Chairperson brought the meeting to a close at 9.42am*

**The Speaker**  
**Chairperson**