

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

**TUESDAY 16 MARCH 2021**  
**SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

**MINUTES**

*The meeting began at 1.04pm.*

**Present:**

**The Speaker (Chairperson)**  
**Ms K Armstrong**  
**Ms C Bailey**  
**Mr K Buchanan**  
**Mr R Butler**  
**Ms S Ennis**  
**Ms D Kelly**  
**Mr G Middleton**

**In attendance:**

<b>Dr A McGarel</b>	<b>Clerk of Business</b>
<b>Mr P Gill</b>	<b>Clerk Assistant</b>
<b>Ms L Hogg</b>	<b>Clerk/Chief Executive</b>
<b>Dr G McGrath</b>	<b>Director of Parliamentary 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>Ms F Leneghan</b>	<b>PS to the Speaker</b>
<b>Ms P Devlin</b>	<b>Assistant Assembly Clerk</b>
<b>Mr M O'Hare</b>	<b>Clerical Supervisor</b>

**Observers:**

**Mr D McCreedy      The Executive Office**

**1      Apologies**

- 1.1      Apologies were received from Colin McGrath, Andrew Muir, John O'Dowd and John Stewart.

**2      Minutes of previous meetings**

- 2.1      The minutes of the meeting on 9 March were **agreed**.

### 3 **Matters Arising**

- 3.1 The Speaker informed Members that they had been provided with a paper outlining options for extending the timeframe for the Ad Hoc Committee on Covid-19 response, which had originally been set up for a 12-month period and was due to expire.
- 3.2 Members **agreed** to extend the timeframe for the Ad Hoc Committee for a period of six months.
- 3.3 There were no other matters arising.

### 4 **Finalisation of the Order Papers for the Plenary Meetings in Week Commencing 22 March 2021**

#### **Monday 22 March**

#### **Public Petition**

- 4.1 Members **noted** that Ms. Paula Bradshaw was seeking to present a Public Petition entitled 'Ban Conversion Therapy', and that this item would last for no more than three minutes.
- 4.2 Members **agreed** to schedule the petition for Ms. Bradshaw.

#### **Assembly Business**

- 4.3 Members **noted** that the DUP had requested a Committee Membership motion, which would be treated as a business motion with no amendment or debate.
- 4.4 Members **agreed** to schedule the motion for the DUP.
- 4.5 To implement the decision made at 3.2, Members **agreed** to schedule a motion to extend the timeframe for the Ad Hoc Committee on Covid-19 response to 30 September 2021.
- 4.6 Members **agreed** that the motion should be treated as a business motion with no amendment or debate.

#### **Executive Committee Business**

- 4.7 Members **noted** that the Executive had scheduled motions relating to two statutory rules for the Minister for Communities and the Minister of Finance.

- 4.8 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate for the motion to affirm the Pneumoconiosis, etc., (Workers' Compensation) (Payment of Claims) (Amendment) Regulations.
- 4.9 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate for the motion to approve Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (Amendment) Regulations.

#### Private Members' Business

- 4.10 Members **noted** that sufficient time was available to schedule Private Members' business.
- 4.11 Members **agreed** to schedule the following Private Members' motions with the usual timings:
- Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition (Alliance)
  - JobStart and the Impact of the Pandemic on 16 to 24 year olds (DUP)
- 4.12 The TEO official indicated that all Ministers were currently available.
- 4.13 Members **agreed** the Order Paper for Monday 22 March.

#### Tuesday 23 March

##### Executive Committee Business

- 4.14 Members **noted** that the Health Minister had scheduled a motion to approve the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (No. 2) (Amendment No. 5) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021.
- 4.15 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate on the motion.

##### Committee Business

- 4.16 Members **noted** that the Committee on Standards and Privileges had requested a motion on its report on the Review of the Assembly's Code of Conduct and Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members: Stage 1.
- 4.17 Members **agreed** to schedule an hour for the debate, with 10 minutes to move and wind and 5 minutes for all other speakers.

#### Private Members' Business

- 4.18 Members **noted** that sufficient time was available to schedule Private Members' business.
- 4.19 Members **agreed** to schedule the following Private Members' motion:
- Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (SDLP)
- 4.20 Members **agreed** to allow 2 hours for the debate, with 10 minutes to move and wind, 20 minutes for a ministerial response and 5 minutes for all other speakers.
- 4.21 Members **agreed** to schedule the following adjournment debate:
- Road Safety at Schools in Mid Ulster (DUP)
- 4.22 The TEO official indicated that all Ministers were currently available.
- 4.23 Members **agreed** the Order Paper for Tuesday 23 March.

#### 5 Provisional Arrangements for the Plenary Meetings in Week Commencing 12 April 2021

##### Monday 12 April

#### Executive Committee Business

- 5.1 Members **noted** that Question Time was scheduled for the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the Minister for Communities.
- 5.2 Members **noted** that no Executive business had been scheduled to date.
- 5.3 The TEO official indicated that no other business was expected at that time.

#### Committee Business

- 5.4 Members **noted** that there were no requests for Committee Business to date.

#### Private Members' Business

- 5.5 Members **agreed** to defer consideration of Private Members' business until the next meeting.
- 5.6 Members **agreed** the Provisional Order Paper for Monday 12 April.

#### Tuesday 13 April

#### Executive Committee Business

- 5.7 Members **noted** that Question Time was scheduled for the Minister for the Economy.
- 5.8 Members **noted** that no Executive business had been scheduled to date.
- 5.9 The TEO official indicated that no other business was expected at that time.

#### Committee Business

- 5.10 Members **noted** that there were no requests for Committee Business to date.

#### Private Members' Business

- 5.11 Members **agreed** to defer consideration of Private Members' business until the next meeting.
- 5.12 Members **agreed** the Provisional Order Paper for Tuesday 13 April.

#### **6 Duration and Timings for Debates on Primary Legislation**

- 6.1 Members **noted** receipt of a paper exploring options to address the issue of long debates on legislation.
- 6.2 Members **agreed** to take more time to consider the paper with their parties and to revisit the matter at the next meeting.

7     **Any Other Business**

- 7.1   Members **noted** receipt of statistics on written questions submitted to each Minister during the last three weeks and the inclusion of information on the number of Priority Written Questions.
- 7.2   Members **agreed** that they no longer considered it necessary to monitor these statistics.
- 7.3   There was no other business.

8     **Date and time of next meeting**

- 8.1   Members **agreed** that the next meeting would take place on Tuesday 23 March in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

*The Speaker brought the meeting to a close at 1.18pm*

**The Speaker**  
**Chairperson**