

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY
BUSINESS COMMITTEE

FRIDAY 9 APRIL 2021
MS TEAMS

MINUTES

The meeting began at 7.05pm.

Present:

The Speaker (Chairperson)
Ms K Armstrong
Ms C Bailey
Mr K Buchanan
Mr R Butler
Ms S Ennis
Ms D Kelly
Mr C McGrath
Mr G Middleton
Mr J O'Dowd

In attendance:

Dr A McGarel	Clerk of Business
Mr P Gill	Clerk Assistant
Ms L Hogg	Clerk/Chief Executive
Dr G McGrath	Director of Parliamentary Services
Ms T Caul	Director of Legal, Governance & Research
Mr R Ramsey	Adviser to the Speaker
Ms F Leneghan	PS to the Speaker
Ms P Devlin	Assistant Assembly Clerk
Mr M O'Hare	Clerical Supervisor

1 Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from John Stewart and Andrew Muir.

2 Revision of the Order Papers for the Plenary Meetings on week commencing 12 April 2021

2.1 The Speaker advised the Committee that he had convened the meeting in light of the announcement of the death of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and to seek the Committee's agreement to revise business to facilitate tributes.

2.2 Members **agreed** that the tributes should be the sole item of business on Monday, and to table a motion to suspend Standing Orders at the beginning of the sitting so that Question Time would not take place.

- 2.3 The Speaker sought the views of parties on the timing for the tributes and, following discussion, Members agreed to allow one and a half hours for the debate but with flexibility to extend the time if necessary.
- 2.4 Members **agreed** that, in accordance with convention, party leaders or representatives would be called first and allowed up to 5 minutes. Other Members wishing to speak would be encouraged not to exceed 3 minutes.
- 2.5 Members **agreed** the Revised Order Paper for Monday 12 April.

Tuesday 13 April

- 2.6 The Speaker proposed that, as a mark of respect, all Private Members' business should be deferred and only the essential Assembly and Executive business that had previously been listed for Monday, including Question Time, would be scheduled for Tuesday.
- 2.7 Members **agreed** to this approach.
- 2.8 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion to suspend Standing Orders to enable Question Time to begin immediately after the Executive business concluded.
- 2.9 Members **agreed** the draft Revised Order Paper for Tuesday 13 April.
- 2.10 The Speaker advised Members that due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Royal household had requested that there should be no physical books of condolence at this time, but an online book of condolence would be made available and a link to this would be placed on the Assembly website.
- 2.11 The Speaker noted that, while they could be requested, he would not be accepting any last minute additional items of business on Monday 12 April, and would be very reluctant to do so on Tuesday 13 April.

3 Date and time of next meeting

- 3.1 Members **agreed** that the next meeting would take place on Tuesday 13 April in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Speaker brought the meeting to a close at 7.16pm

The Speaker
Chairperson