

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY
BUSINESS COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 27 APRIL 2021
SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

MINUTES

The meeting began at 1.08pm.

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 A Muir
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
Mr J McMillen	Head of Legal Services
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

Observers:

Mr G Lyons	Junior Minister
Mr D McCreedy	The Executive Office

1 Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from John Stewart.

2 Minutes of previous meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting on 20 April were **agreed**.

3 Matters Arising

3.1 The Speaker drew Members' attention to a memo he had sent to the Committee outlining proposals to manage timed debates in plenary, explained his proposals in more detail and answered Members' questions.

3.2 Following discussion, Members **agreed** to adopt the Speaker's proposals, on a trial basis until the summer recess with regular monitoring, for:

- i. An additional 15 minutes to be added to a fixed time debate if an amendment is selected, with a further 15 minutes for each additional amendment. Adjusted timings will be shown on indicative timings in advance.
- ii. A discretionary 10-15 minute 'grace period' to be added to the end of a fixed time debate to help broaden the scope of debate or range of participants. It will be used at the Chair's discretion taking into account the circumstances of a specific debate and will not be notified to Members in advance.

3.3 Members **noted** that it remained the case that it would not be in order to challenge the Chair's decision on whether or how to exercise the 'grace period'.

3.4 There were no other matters arising.

4 Finalisation of the Order Papers for the Plenary Meetings in Week Commencing 3 May 2021

4.1 Members **noted** that there would be no sitting on Monday 3 May due to the public holiday.

Tuesday 4 May

Executive Committee Business

4.2 Members **noted** that seven items of Executive business had been scheduled.

4.3 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate for Consideration Stage of the Pension Schemes Bill for the Minister for Communities.

- 4.4 Members **noted** that five Health Protection Regulations had been scheduled by the Minister of Health and that the Executive Office had tabled the motions and was seeking a single debate for all five motions.
- 4.5 Members **agreed** to schedule a single untimed debate for all five regulations.
- 4.6 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate on the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 (Coronavirus) (Amendment of Certain Relevant Periods) Regulations (NI) 2021 for the Minister for the Economy.

Private Members' Business

- 4.7 Members **noted** that they had previously agreed to schedule Second Stage of the Climate Change Bill for Ms Bailey, subject to Executive Business.
- 4.8 Members **noted** that a large number of items of Executive Business had since been scheduled so Ms Bailey had agreed to defer Second Stage of her Bill until the following week.
- 4.9 Members **agreed** to schedule the following adjournment debate:
- Eden Project Foyle (DUP)
- 4.10 The junior Minister indicated that all Ministers were currently available.
- 4.11 Members **agreed** the Order Paper for Tuesday 4 May.

5 Provisional Arrangements for the Plenary Meetings in Week Commencing 10 May 2021

Monday 10 May

Executive Committee Business

- 5.1 Members **noted** that Question Time was scheduled for the Minister for Communities and the Minister for the Economy.
- 5.2 Members **noted** that the Executive had not scheduled any other business.
- 5.3 The junior Minister advised that there was no further business expected at this time.

Committee Business

- 5.4 Members **noted** that the Committee for Health was seeking to schedule a motion to coincide with Mental Health week but that the detail of the motion was not yet finalised.
- 5.5 Members **agreed** to schedule a 1-and-a-half-hour debate for the Committee for Health with 10 minutes to move and wind, and five minutes for all other speakers.

Private Members' Business

- 5.6 Members **agreed** to schedule Second Stage of the Climate Change Bill for Ms Bailey, subject to additional Executive Business being requested next week.
- 5.7 Members **agreed** to defer consideration of further Private Members business until the next meeting.
- 5.8 Members **agreed** the Provisional Order Paper for Monday 10 May.

Tuesday 11 May

Executive Committee Business

- 5.9 Members **noted** that Question Time was scheduled for the Minister of Education.
- 5.10 Members **noted** that the Executive had not yet scheduled any other business.
- 5.11 The junior Minister advised that no further business was expected at that time.

Committee Business

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

Private Members' Business

- 5.13 Members **agreed** to defer consideration of Private Members business until the next meeting.
- 5.14 Members **agreed** the Provisional Order Paper for Tuesday 11 May.

6 **Any Other Business**

6.1 There was no other business.

7 **Date and time of next meeting**

7.1 Members **agreed** that the next meeting would take place on Tuesday 4 May in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Speaker brought the meeting to a close at 1.28pm

**The Speaker
Chairperson**