

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY
BUSINESS COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 15 JUNE 2021
SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

MINUTES

The meeting began at 1.05pm.

Present:

The Speaker (Chairperson)
Mr A Allen
Ms K Armstrong
Ms C Bailey
Ms J Bunting
Mr T Clarke
Ms S Ennis
Mrs D Kelly
Mr C McGrath
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 S Kelly	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 D Kearney	Junior Minister
Mr D McCreedy	The Executive Office

1 Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from Robbie Butler.

2 Minutes of previous meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting on 8 June were **agreed**.

3 **Matters Arising**

- 3.1 Members **noted** that following the very late sitting on 8 June, the Speaker had written to all Ministers regarding the need for efficient scheduling of Executive Business, and that a copy of this letter had been provided in Members' papers.
- 3.2 There were no other matters arising.

4 **Consent Decisions**

- 4.1 Members **noted** that at the meeting on 1 June, they had considered correspondence from the Committee on Procedures seeking the views of the Business Committee on provision for handling consent decisions and had agreed to consider and return to discuss a response.
- 4.2 Members **noted** that an advice paper had been circulated to inform their consideration of the issue.
- 4.3 Following discussion, Members sought further information and **agreed** to consider the issue and discuss again at the next meeting.

5 **Finalisation of the Order Papers for the Plenary Meetings in Week Commencing 21 June 2021**

Monday 21 June

Assembly Business

- 5.1 Members **noted** that the resignation of Mrs Arlene Foster as First Minister resulted in vacancies in both the Office of the First Minister and the deputy First Minister.
- 5.2 Members **noted** that section 16B of the 1998 Act sets out the requirements for filling vacancies in these offices and there is a statutory requirement for them to be filled within a period of seven days, i.e. by 1pm next Monday.
- 5.3 On that basis Members **agreed** to schedule an item of business for filling the vacancies in the offices of First Minister and deputy First Minister on the Order Paper for Monday 21 June.
- 5.4 Members **agreed**, in the event that nominations to the posts are made, to limit the total time for comments by other Members to 30 minutes with each Member having no longer than 3 minutes.

- 5.5 Members **agreed** that if the posts were not filled, there would be no opportunity for comment by Members.
- 5.6 Members **agreed** to schedule a Committee Membership motion for the DUP, subject to the final wording being provided later that day.

Executive Committee Business

- 5.7 Members **noted** that, in addition to the business agreed at last week's meeting, the Executive Office had listed a further three items of business.
- 5.8 Members **noted** that the First Stage of the Charities Bill had been scheduled, and would be added to Indicative Timings when legislative competence had been confirmed.
- 5.9 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate to approve the draft Administration (Restrictions on Disposal etc. to Connected Persons) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021.
- 5.10 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate for the motion to approve the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 (Protection from Detriment in Health and Safety Cases) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021.

Committee Business

- 5.11 Members **noted** that no Committee Business had been requested.

Private Members' Business

- 5.12 Members **agreed** that insufficient time was available to schedule Private Members' motions.
- 5.13 Members **agreed** the Order Paper for Monday 21 June.

Tuesday 22 June

Executive Committee Business

- 5.14 Members **noted** that Executive business remained as agreed at the last meeting.

- 5.15 Members **noted** that the Ministerial statement on the NSMC Inland Waterways Sectoral meeting had been confirmed with the Speaker's Office.

Committee Business

- 5.16 Members **noted** that no Committee Business had been requested.

Private Members' Business

- 5.17 Members **agreed** not to schedule Private Members' motions.
- 5.18 Members **agreed** not to schedule an adjournment debate.
- 5.19 Members **agreed** the Order Paper for Tuesday 22 June.

6 Provisional Arrangements for the Plenary Meetings in Week Commencing 28 June 2021

Monday 28 June

Executive Committee Business

- 6.1 Members **noted** that Question Time was scheduled for the the Executive Office and Minister for the Economy.
- 6.2 Members **noted** that the Minister for Communities had listed Consideration Stage of the Local Government (Meetings and Performance) Bill.
- 6.3 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate for the Bill stage.
- 6.4 Members **noted** that the Minister for Communities had listed a Legislative Consent Motion for The Compensation (London Capital & Finance plc and Fraud Compensation Fund) Bill.
- 6.5 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate for the LCM.
- 6.6 The junior Minister indicated that no other business was expected at that time.

Committee Business

- 6.7 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate for the Committee for the Economy to extend the committee stage of the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill.
- 6.8 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion for the Committee for the Economy on the High Street Stimulus Voucher Scheme, with the usual timings.

Private Members' Business

- 6.9 Members **noted** that there may be sufficient time for Private Members' business, but **agreed** to defer any decisions until the next meeting.
- 6.10 Members **agreed** the Provisional Order Paper for Monday 28 June.

Tuesday 29 June

Executive Committee Business

- 6.11 Members **noted** that Question Time was scheduled for the Minister of Education.
- 6.12 Members **noted** that the Minister for Communities had listed Second Stage of the Charities Bill.
- 6.13 Members **noted** that the Minister for Communities had listed Final Stage of the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill.
- 6.14 Members **agreed** to schedule untimed debates for both Bill stages.
- 6.15 Members **noted** that the Minister of Justice had listed a motion seeking the approval of the Assembly for the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Relevant Benefits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021.
- 6.16 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate for the motion.
- 6.17 Members **noted** that the Minister for the Economy had listed a Legislative Consent Motion for the Westminster Rating (Coronavirus) and Directors Disqualification (Dissolved Companies) Bill.
- 6.18 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate for the LCM.
- 6.19 The junior Minister indicated that no other business was expected at that time.

Committee Business

6.20 Members **noted** that no Committee Business had been requested.

Private Members' Business

6.21 Members **noted** that there was likely to be insufficient time for Private Members' business, but **agreed** to confirm this at the next meeting.

6.22 Members **agreed** the Provisional Order Paper for Tuesday 29 June.

7 Any Other Business

7.1 The Speaker advised that if there were indications that nominations to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister might take place earlier than the deadline, Business Committee would be contacted by emails to make the necessary arrangements.

7.2 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 22 June in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Speaker brought the meeting to a close at 1.26pm

Mr John O'Dowd
Acting Chairperson