

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

**TUESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2021**  
**SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

**MINUTES**

*The meeting began at 1.05pm.*

**Present:**

**The Speaker (Chairperson)**  
**Ms C Bailey**  
**Ms P Bradshaw**  
**Ms J Bunting**  
**Mr R Butler**  
**Mr T Clarke**  
**Ms S Ennis**  
**Mrs D Kelly**  
**Mr C McGrath**  
**Mr A Muir**  
**Mr J O'Dowd**

**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 S Kelly</b>    | <b>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:**

|                      |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Mr D Kearney</b>  | <b>Junior Minister</b>      |
| <b>Mr D McCreedy</b> | <b>The Executive Office</b> |

**1 Apologies**

1.1 Apologies were received from Rosemary Barton.

**2 Minutes of previous meeting**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting on 12 October were **agreed**.

### 3 **Matters Arising**

- 3.1 The Speaker reminded Members that at the last meeting they had noted correspondence from the Committee on Procedures seeking views on its inquiry into processes and support for PMBs.
- 3.2 The Speaker advised that an initial draft response had been provided in Members' packs and suggested that they consider the response in more depth at the additional meeting of the Committee after recess.
- 3.3 Members **agreed** to the Speaker's proposed approach.
- 3.4 There were no other matters arising.

### 4 **Finalisation of the Order Papers for the Plenary Meetings in Week Commencing 1 November**

#### **Monday 1 November**

##### Members' Statements

- 4.1 Members **noted** that Members' Statements remained scheduled.

##### Public Petition

- 4.2 Members **noted** that a petition for Mr McNulty remained scheduled.

##### Assembly Business

- 4.3 Members **noted** that the DUP and Sinn Féin were seeking to schedule Committee membership motions.
- 4.4 Members **agreed** to schedule Committee Membership motions for the DUP and Sinn Féin as business motions with no debate or amendment.

##### Executive Committee Business

- 4.5 Members **noted** that following the switch agreed by the Committee last week, the Minister for Communities would respond to oral questions on this date.

- 4.6 Members **noted** that all other Executive Business remained as scheduled at the last meeting.
- 4.7 Members **noted** that the statement from the Minister of Finance would be included on Indicative Timings once confirmed with the Speaker's Office.

#### Committee Business

- 4.8 Members **noted** that four motions to extend committee stages of bills remained scheduled.

#### Private Members' Business

- 4.9 Members **noted** that there was no change to Private Members' Business.
- 4.10 Members **agreed** the Order Paper for Monday 1 November.

### Tuesday 2 November

#### Executive Committee Business

- 4.11 Members **noted** that since last week the Minister of Health had scheduled Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 (Amendment No. 17) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021.
- 4.12 Members **noted** that this would be debated alongside the two Health Protection Regulations scheduled the previous week.

#### Committee Business

- 4.13 Members **noted** that no Committee business had been requested.

#### Private Members' Business

- 4.14 Members **noted** that there was no change to Private Members' motions.
- 4.15 Members **noted** that no Minister could respond to the adjournment topic selected by Alliance the previous week, and **agreed** on that basis that Alliance could select an alternative topic, as follows:

- Water Quality and Safety at North Down Coastal Bathing Areas.

4.16 Members **agreed** the Order Paper for Tuesday 2 November.

## 5 Provisional Arrangements for the Plenary Meetings in Week Commencing 8 November

### Monday 8 November

#### Members' Statements

5.1 Members **noted** that Members' Statements were scheduled but could be removed when finalising the Order Paper if it became apparent that there would not be enough time.

#### Assembly Business

5.2 Members **noted** receipt of correspondence received by the Speaker from the Secretary of State, advising that the NIO was making three necessary amendments to the Flags Regulations (NI) 2000 and seeking a report on the proposal from the Assembly by 27 October.

5.3 Members **noted** the return correspondence from the Speaker seeking an extension to the deadline because of Hallowee'en recess and the Speaker's expectation, based on verbal communication, that the NIO would extend the deadline to 11 November.

5.4 Members **noted** that the Assembly was required to consider the proposed amendments and provide a report before the deadline to the Secretary of State, who has a duty to consider that report before laying the amended Regulations.

5.5 Members **agreed** to schedule a debate in the name of the Business Committee for the Assembly to take note of the proposed legislation.

5.6 Members **agreed** to apply the same arrangements as the last debate on this legislation; the debate would be untimed but each speaker would have up to three minutes to enable as wide a range of views as possible to be expressed.

#### Executive Committee Business

5.7 Members **noted** that Question Time was scheduled for the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the Executive Office, following the switch agreed by Members last week.

- 5.8 Members **noted** that the Executive had not scheduled any other business.
- 5.9 The junior Minister indicated that no other business was expected at that time.

#### Committee Business

- 5.10 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate for the Committee for Health to extend the Committee Stage of the Adoption and Children Bill.

#### Private Members' Business

- 5.11 Members **noted** that sufficient time was available for Private Members' business.
- 5.12 Members **noted** that Mr McGrath had requested that the second stage of his Education (Curriculum) (CPR and AED) Bill be considered for debate as the conventional 4-week period after introduction would have elapsed.
- 5.13 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate for the second stage of the Education (Curriculum) (CPR and AED) Bill.
- 5.14 Members **agreed** to defer taking a decision on scheduling Private Members' motions until the next meeting.
- 5.15 Members **agreed** the Provisional Order Paper for Monday 8 November.

#### Tuesday 9 November

##### Executive Committee Business

- 5.16 Members **noted** that Question Time was scheduled for the Minister for the Economy.
- 5.17 Members **noted** that the Executive had not scheduled any other business.
- 5.18 The junior Minister indicated that no other business was expected at that time.

### Committee Business

- 5.19 Members **noted** that the Assembly and Executive Review Committee had requested an hour and a half to debate a motion, the wording of which was still to be confirmed.
- 5.20 Members agreed to schedule one and a half hours for the AERC debate.

### Private Members' Business

- 5.21 Members **noted** that Mr. Catney had requested that the second stage of his Period Products (Free Provision) Bill be considered for debate as the conventional 4-week period after introduction would have elapsed.
- 5.22 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate second stage of the Period Products (Free Provision) Bill.
- 5.23 Members **agreed** to defer taking a decision on scheduling Private Members' motions until the next meeting.
- 5.24 Members **agreed** to schedule the following adjournment debate:
- Strule Shared Education Campus in Omagh (Sinn Féin)
- 5.25 Members **agreed** the Provisional Order Paper for Tuesday 9 November.

## 6 Any Other Business

- 6.1 The Speaker reminded Members that the Committee had agreed that 1m social distancing in the Chamber applied only to Question Time and not to other items such as Urgent Oral Questions or statements.
- 6.2 Following discussion, Members **agreed** that the 1m distancing arrangement for Question Time would be extended to include Urgent Oral Questions but 2m distancing would remain for all other items of business.
- 6.3 Members **agreed** that floor plans of the Chamber should be reissued to all Members.
- 6.4 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 2 November in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

*The Speaker brought the meeting to a close at 1.21pm*

**The Speaker  
Chairperson**