

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

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

**MINUTES**

*The meeting began at 1.03pm.*

**Present:**

**The Speaker (Chairperson)**  
**Mrs R Barton**  
**Ms J Bunting**  
**Mr R Butler**  
**Mr T Clarke**  
**Mrs D Kelly**  
**Mr C McGrath**  
**Mr A Muir**  
**Mr J O'Dowd**  
**Miss R Woods**

**In attendance:**

<b>Dr A McGarel</b>	<b>Clerk of Business</b>
<b>Mr P Gill</b>	<b>Clerk Assistant</b>
<b>Mr A Hicks</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 G Middleton</b>	<b>Junior Minister</b>
<b>Mr D McCreedy</b>	<b>The Executive Office</b>

**1 Apologies**

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Sinéad Ennis and Clare Bailey.
- 1.2 The Speaker welcomed Miss Rachel Woods, who was attending in place of Ms Bailey.

**2 Minutes of previous meeting**

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting on 9 November were **agreed**.
- 2.2 The minutes of the additional meeting on 10 November were **agreed**.

### 3 **Matters Arising**

- 3.1 The Speaker advised Members that, following their discussions at last week's additional meeting, the ten recommendations outlined in the paper provided at that meeting had been adapted into ten measures for managing plenary time in the light of legislative pressures towards the end of the mandate.
- 3.2 Members **agreed** the ten measures for managing plenary time, and **agreed** that the Speaker would write to CLG, the Executive and all MLAs advising of the Committee's agreed approach.
- 3.3 There were no other matters arising.

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

#### **Monday 22 November**

##### Members' Statements

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

##### Executive Committee Business

- 4.2 Members **noted** that Executive Business remained as scheduled at the last meeting.
- 4.3 Members **noted** that the Minister for Justice had scheduled a statement on Charlotte's Law, which would be included on Indicative Timings once confirmed with Speaker's Office.

##### Private Members' Business

- 4.4 Members **noted** that Second Stage of the Hospital Parking Charges Bill remained scheduled for Aisling Reilly.
- 4.5 Members **noted** that they had agreed to schedule an untimed debate for second stage of this Bill. The Speaker invited Members to consider if, in light of the measures now agreed, they wanted to apply a time limit to individual contributions to the debate.
- 4.6 Following discussion, Members agreed to allocate up to 15 minutes for the Sponsor to move the stage and 10 minutes to wind and up to 10 minutes for

all other contributions. Should the Minister of Health wish to contribute, Members **agreed** that he would be allocated up to 15 minutes.

- 4.7 Members **agreed** the Order Paper for Monday 22 November.

## **Tuesday 23 November**

### Executive Committee Business

- 4.8 Members **noted** that Executive Business remained as scheduled at the last meeting.
- 4.9 Members **noted** that they had scheduled an untimed debate for second stage of the Non-Domestic Rates Valuations Bill and that this would remain in place as they had agreed not to put time limits on contributions to second stage debates of bills proceeding by accelerated passage.
- 4.10 Members **agreed** that the item would remain untimed.

### Private Members' Business

- 4.11 Members **noted** that no Private Members' motions were scheduled.
- 4.12 Members **agreed** that the adjournment debate which was provisionally scheduled at the previous meeting should remain scheduled.
- 4.13 Members **agreed** the Order Paper for Tuesday 23 November.

## **5 Provisional Arrangements for the Plenary Meetings in Week Commencing 29 November**

### **Monday 29 November**

#### Members' Statements

- 5.1 Members **noted** that Members' Statements were scheduled as usual.

#### Executive Committee Business

- 5.2 Members **noted** that Question Time was scheduled for the Executive Office and Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

- 5.3 Members **noted** that the First Minister and deputy First Minister had switched Question Time slots, so the First Minister would respond to questions on 29 November, with the deputy First Minister responding on 13 December.
- 5.4 Members **noted** that the Executive had listed three items of business:
- Further Consideration Stage of the Health and Social Care Bill
  - Further Consideration Stage of the Damages (Return on Investment) Bill
  - Further Consideration Stage of the Horse Racing (Amendment) Bill
- 5.5 Members **agreed** to schedule untimed debates for these items.
- 5.6 The junior Minister indicated that no other business was expected at that time.

#### Committee Business

- 5.7 Members **noted** that the Committee for Infrastructure was seeking to schedule a motion on the report on its Inquiry into the Decarbonisation of Road Transport.
- 5.8 Members **agreed** to schedule one and a half hours for the debate, with 10 minutes each for the move and wind, 15 minutes for the Minister to respond, and 5 minutes for all other speakers

#### Private Members' Business

- 5.9 Members **agreed** to schedule an untimed debate for Rachel Woods to move the second stage of her Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill.
- 5.10 In line with their agreement to manage plenary time, Members **agreed** to allocate 15 minutes to move, 10 minutes to wind, 15 minutes for a Ministerial response if applicable, and 10 minutes for all other speakers.
- 5.11 Members **agreed** the Provisional Order Paper for Monday 29 November.

### Tuesday 30 November

#### Executive Committee Business

- 5.12 Members **noted** that Question Time was scheduled for the Minister for Communities.

- 5.13 Members **noted** that the Executive had listed three items of business:
- A motion seeking Accelerated Passage for the Animal Welfare (Service Animals) Bill
  - Second Stage of the Animal Welfare (Service Animals) Bill
  - Consideration Stage of the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill
- 5.14 Members **agreed** to schedule untimed debates for all of these items.
- 5.15 The junior Minister indicated that no other business was expected at that time.

#### Private Members' Business

- 5.16 Members **noted** that the business already scheduled brought the estimated adjournment time to 4.45pm with several items of business untimed, and on that basis **agreed** not to schedule a Private Members' motion.
- 5.17 Members **agreed** to schedule the following adjournment debate:
- Bypass Road for Moira (UUP)
- 5.18 Members **agreed** the Provisional Order Paper for Tuesday 30 November.

#### **6 Response to the Committee on Procedures on the Terms of Reference for their Inquiry into Procedures and Support for Private Members' Bills**

- 6.1 Members **considered** the draft response to the Committee on Procedures which covered aspects of the terms of reference that relate directly to the remit of the Business Committee, and **agreed** that it should issue.

#### **7 Any Other Business**

- 7.1 There was no other business.

#### **8 Date and time of next meeting**

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

*The Speaker brought the meeting to a close at 1.31pm*

**The Speaker  
Chairperson**