

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

**TUESDAY 18 JANUARY 2022**  
**SENATE CHAMBER**

**MINUTES**

*The meeting began at 5.48pm.*

**Present:**

**The Speaker (Chairperson)**  
**Ms C Bailey**  
**Mrs R Barton**  
**Ms P Bradshaw**  
**Ms J Bunting**  
**Mr T Clarke**  
**Ms S Ennis**  
**Ms D Kelly**  
**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>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>

**1 Apologies**

1.1 Apologies were received from Colin McGrath.

**2 Finalisation of the Order Paper for the Plenary Meetings on Wednesday 19 January**

2.1 Members **noted** that, further to their discussions at their earlier meeting, Consideration Stage of the Integrated Education Bill was lasting considerably longer than had been anticipated when it was scheduled, and that it was unlikely that the Executive and Committee Business listed for that day would

be reached even if the sitting were extended into the following day under Standing Order 10(5).

- 2.2 The Speaker advised that by convention the Business Committee has always prioritised Executive and Committee business before scheduling Private Members' Business, and that Standing Order 10(6) makes provision for the Business Committee to arrange additional sittings when circumstances require. The Speaker suggested that it would be appropriate for the Business Committee to agree an Order Paper for a sitting on Wednesday 19 January that ensured that the Executive and Committee business listed on the Order Paper for Tuesday 18 January would be considered the following day.
- 2.3 The Speaker informed Members that it was his intention to try to conclude the group 3 debate of the Integrated Education Bill that evening but would adjourn around no later than 11pm, and what remained unfinished of the bill would then commence immediately after Executive and Committee business had been dealt with on the following day.
- 2.4 Members **noted** that draft Order Paper and Indicative Timings for an additional sitting tomorrow had been provided for their consideration, and that the Executive had requested that the following three items of business listed for the Minister for Communities would be included:
- The motion for accelerated passage of the Welfare Supplementary Payments (Amendment) Bill;
  - Second stage of that bill; and
  - Further Consideration Stage of the Social Security Terminal Illness Bill.
- 2.5 Members noted that as the Minister for Communities would not be available until after 11am on Wednesday, the two items of Committee Business had been listed first to enable a 10.30am start:
- A motion to extend the Committee Stage of the Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill for the Committee for the Economy
  - The motion from the Committee for the Executive Office on the Public Services Ombudsman Statement of Principles Concerning Complaints Handling Procedures
- 2.6 Members **noted** that as the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs had indicated he is not in a position to move the motion on Single Use Carrier Bags Regulations, it had not been included.
- 2.7 Members **noted** that the continuation of Consideration Stage of the Integrated Education Bill was scheduled as the next item, to allow it to continue if it did not conclude that evening.

- 2.8 The Speaker suggested Members consider moving the adjournment debate on Road Safety on the A5 to Wednesday, and advised that the Minister for Infrastructure had indicated that she would be available to respond.
- 2.9 The DUP representative advised that the Minister of Education had indicated that another day to consider the Bill was unhelpful and the party's preference remained to continue that evening.
- 2.10 The Sinn Féin representative advised that he would not support that day's sitting continuing beyond 11pm and that time was being taken up because conscious decisions were being taken to push for divisions on this Bill.
- 2.11 The Alliance representative advised that in the next number of weeks this would be a frequent issue and the safety of staff and members needed to be considered.
- 2.12 The SDLP representative agreed that safety needed to be considered, noting that some staff and members had to travel long distances to and from Parliament Buildings.
- 2.13 The DUP representative noted that the Bill before them had enormous ramifications and Members should be free to put their position, and their vote, on record.
- 2.14 Members **noted** that business as proposed would enable members of the Education Committee to attend the scheduled meeting on Wednesday and still participate in the debate on this Bill.
- 2.15 Following discussion, Members **agreed** to the proposed approach, and **agreed** the Order Paper for Wednesday 19 January.
- 2.16 A Member advised that notification of proxy votes is currently required by 9.30am and requested more flexibility to accommodate long sitting days. The Speaker indicated that he would ask for more flexibility to be considered.
- 2.17 Members **agreed** to schedule an adjournment debate for the sitting on Tuesday 25 January and noted that the next topic selection was for the DUP.
- 2.18 Members **agreed** to schedule the following adjournment debate for 25 January:
- Crisis in Cover for GP Out-of-Hours Service in Fermanagh and South Tyrone (DUP)

### 3 **Any Other Business**

- 3.1 There was no other Business.

4 **Date and time of next meeting**

- 4.1 Members **agreed** that the next Committee meeting would take place on Tuesday 25 January at 1pm in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

*The Speaker brought the meeting to a close at 6.04pm*

**The Speaker  
Chairperson**