



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Chairpersons' Liaison Group

Minutes of Proceedings

2 March 2021

Meeting Location: The Senate, Parliament Buildings

Present:

- Dr Steve Aiken OBE MLA
- Mr Colm Gildernew MLA
- Mr Paul Givan MLA
- Mr William Humphrey MLA (Chairperson)
- Mr Chris Lyttle MLA
- Mr Colin McGrath MLA
- Miss Michelle McIlveen MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:

- Dr Caoimhe Archibald MLA
- Ms Paula Bradley MLA
- Ms Sinéad Ennis MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
- Mr Declan McAleer MLA
- Ms Carál Ní Chuilín MLA

Apologies:

- Mr Mervyn Storey MLA



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In Attendance: Mrs Lesley Hogg, Clerk to the Assembly/Chief Executive
Mr Jim McManus, Clerk
Mr Trevor Allen, Senior Assistant Clerk

In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:

Dr Gareth McGrath, Director of Parliamentary Services
Dr Kevin Pelan, Clerk Assistant
Ms Clodagh Miskelly, Senior Assistant Clerk
Mr Neal Flanagan, Assistant Clerk
Mrs Bronagh Irwin, Assistant Clerk
Mrs Diane Bergeron, Clerical Supervisor

The meeting commenced at 1:39pm in closed session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Chairperson's Business

No matters of Chairperson's Business were raised.



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3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting of 2 February 2021, as circulated and agreed by correspondence, were noted.

4. Matters Arising

Chairpersons discussed the commitment in the ‘New Decade, New Approach’ document that an “*Assembly Committee should be established to monitor progress against each of the Programme for Government outcomes and to consider potential measures for achieving improvement*”. Chairpersons noted the procedural advice provided by the Clerk on the establishment of a committee. Whilst Chairpersons did not take a collective view at this time on establishing a committee, Mr Lyttle recorded his support for the establishment of an ad hoc committee to monitor progress against each of the Programme for Government outcomes and to consider potential measures for achieving improvement.

Agreed: Chairpersons agreed that the Clerk Assistant should provide a comparative paper, outlining how similar scrutiny committees operate in other legislatures, for consideration at the next meeting.

Chairpersons noted correspondence received from the Committee for the Executive Office confirming that it is content to assume an oversight role in respect of development of the Programme for Government, to continue to monitor progress and to provide co-ordination of responses from other statutory committees.

Mr Gildernew left the meeting at 1:56 pm.

Mr McGrath left the meeting at 1:57 pm.

The Chairperson left the meeting at 1:59 pm. The Deputy Chairperson took the chair.



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5. Feasibility Study on Additional Committee Meeting Space and Broadcasting Capacity

Chairpersons received a briefing from Ms Susie Brown, Head of Communications, who provided details of a feasibility study on additional committee meeting space and broadcasting capacity.

Dr Archibald left the meeting at 2.01 pm.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Deputy Chairperson thanked Ms Brown for the presentation.

Agreed: Chairpersons agreed that they would consider the options available and revert back to the Clerk outlining their preferred course of action. To expedite taking forward the preferred option it was agreed that the final decision will be agreed by correspondence.

6. Appointment of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson

The Group noted that, as per the rules and procedures agreed on 31 March 2020, a new Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to the Group should be appointed with effect from April through to the end of the current mandate.

Ms Carál Ní Chuilín proposed that Ms Sinéad Ennis be appointed as Chairperson of the Chairpersons' Liaison Group until the end of the current mandate.

Agreed: Ms Sinéad Ennis is appointed Chairperson of CLG until the end of the current mandate.

Ms Sinéad Ennis proposed that Mr Colin McGrath be appointed as Deputy Chairperson of the Chairpersons' Liaison Group until the end of the current mandate.

Agreed: Mr Colin McGrath is appointed Deputy Chairperson of CLG until the end of the current mandate.



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7. Any Other Business

Chairpersons discussed correspondence received from the Committee for Justice regarding the Executive's decision to allow a condensed Committee Stage of the Damages (Return on Investment) Bill.

Agreed: Chairpersons agreed to write to the Speaker to advise that the Group considered the matter and whilst recognising this is currently an issue for the Committee for Justice, the Chairpersons' Liaison Group shares the concerns of the committee.

Agreed: Chairpersons agreed to forward the correspondence on to all Assembly committees.

8. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next Chairpersons' Liaison Group meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 13 April 2021 at 1.30 pm in The Senate, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 2.24 pm.

Mr William Humphrey MLA
Chairperson, Chairpersons' Liaison Group
12 March 2021