



COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURES

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Wednesday 16 December 2020
ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS AND VIDEO-CONFERENCE

Present: Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Nicola Brogan MLA

Video-Conference: Ms Linda Dillon MLA (Chairperson)
Mrs Rosemary Barton MLA
Ms Sinéad Bradley MLA
Mr Gerry Carroll MLA

Nick Mitford (Committee Clerk)

In attendance: Shane McAteer (Committee Clerk)
Stewart Kennedy (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Joanne Keenan (Clerical Assistant)

Apologies: Mr John O'Dowd MLA
Mr Gary Middleton MLA

The meeting commenced in open session at 2.33pm.

The Chairperson informed Members that the Clerk would join the meeting via video-conference and Shane McAteer (Clerk of AERC and Standards & Privileges Committee) would provide clerking duties in the meeting room.

The Committee Clerk informed Members that he had received notification from Mr John O'Dowd MLA and that he had nominated the Chairperson to vote on his behalf.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 2 December 2020.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Standing Orders – Temporary Provisions: Motions to Amend

The Committee noted a cover note from the Clerk regarding the extension of the temporary provisions in Standing Orders 110 to 116.

The Committee considered a draft motion to extend Standing orders 110 to 116 to 3 July 2021.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft motion.

The Committee considered a draft letter to the Speaker which explained the Committee's deliberations and decision to amend Standing Order 112(8).

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft letter and to forward it to the Speaker.

The Chairperson informed Members that the Clerk is awaiting legal advice in respect of the wording of a draft motion to amend Standing Order 112(8).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider a draft motion by way of correspondence over the recess period once the legal advice had been received.

5. Proxy Voting

The Committee considered an options paper from the Clerk which set out potential ways forward for the Committee in respect of proxy voting.

During discussions, the Committee considered the following options:

- A) Do nothing and keep Standing Orders and permanent proxy voting as they currently are – Standing Order 27(11);
- B) Permanently put in place Standing Order 112 which is the current temporary provision for proxy voting as result of Covid-19; and
- C) A more considered approach containing parental leave and/or medical absence outside of Covid-19.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer this item of business.

6. Legislative Consent Motions

The Committee considered responses received in relation to its Inquiry on the Legislative Consent Motion procedures.

Agreed: Following discussions, the Committee agreed to defer this item of business until it had received from briefings from Assembly Officials on the procedures of Legislative Consent Motions and any evidence it might receive from its counterparts in Scotland, Wales and Westminster.

7. Strategic Planning

The Committee considered its report on Strategic Planning.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer this item of business until after the recess period.

Mr Gerry Carroll left the meeting at 3.06pm.

8. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- The latest newsletter from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission;
- Notification of the launch of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission's Annual Statement 2020; and
- Notification from Pivotal of its recently published report 'Education, training and skills for young people aged 14-19 years old'.

9. Forward Work Programme

The Chairperson informed Members that the Committee will continue to progress with LCMs and hybrid proceedings and review its strategic planning early in the New Year.

10. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson provided the Committee with a brief overview of an informal meeting she attended with the Deputy Chairperson, the Clerk and Assembly Officials regarding the potential introduction of hybrid proceedings in the chamber.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to incorporate hybrid proceedings as a substantial item on its forward work plan.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the Chairperson to write to the Speaker to thank him for arranging his Officials' attendance at the meeting and to also confirm that the Committee will add this issue as a substantial item on its forward work programme and give further consideration in the New Year.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing from the Clerk Assistant and the Head of Communications on the practicalities and procedural issues on Hybrid Proceedings

11. Any other Business

There was no other business.

12. Date, time and place of next meeting

Agreed: It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday 20 January 2021 at 2.30pm in Room 29.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 3.16pm.

Linda Dillon MLA
Chairperson, Committee on Procedures
20 January 2021